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Perspectives on Urban and Rural Schools and Their Communities

Making Connections

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For many people, the terms *urban* and *rural* may bring to mind sharply contrasting images of crowds and crops, subways and silos, taxis and tractors. Yet the same terms, when heard or read in the context of education, may evoke fuzzy images or none at all. People who know little about urban or rural schools may consider them small, isolated segments of the education community. Nothing could be further from the truth. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately one-half of all students attend urban and rural schools.[1] Clearly America's economic strength and cultural continuity depend on the success of these students, schools, and communities.

This issue of *The ERIC Review* explores both urban and rural school-community relationships. Readers may consider this an ambitious or perhaps curious undertaking. After all, what do urban and rural communities have in common? A number of factors, say Erwin Flaxman and Timothy Collins, experts in urban education and rural education, respectively, and the issue's principal authors. In the issue's introduction, the authors describe national and state trends, as well as economic conditions, that have spurred urban and rural communities to develop education reform models that are based on school-community engagement. In *Section 1: Urban and Rural Community Education,* the authors provide separate perspectives on school-community relationships. Erwin Flaxman discusses urban school-community relationships, emphasizing the principles of community schooling and the importance of parent involvement. In contrast, Timothy Collins describes rural school-community relationships, focusing on historical bonds between rural schools and communities as well as on the role of rural schools in promoting local economic and community development. Both authors address current school-community challenges, characteristics of successful reform models, examples of models currently in use, and barriers to—as well as practical suggestions for—creating and developing strong school-community relationships. *Section 2: Initiatives and Resources* includes information about federal programs and initiatives that support school-community partnerships (especially in economically distressed areas), resources for further information, and tips for searching the ERIC database for information on urban and rural schools and related topics. The *Conclusion* provides practical steps that all educators can take to develop and maintain strong schools and communities.

Like recent issues of *The ERIC Review,* this issue presents only an overview of its topic. Although several themes integral to community-based education reform—afterschool programs, school design, and school safety—are not discussed in depth due to space limitations, relevant resources are included as a starting point for further exploration.

Unlike recent issues of the *Review,* this issue is written primarily for educators. Certainly the development of strong school-community relationships requires the collaborative efforts of parents, students, business leaders, and other community members as well as educators. However, this issue's main authors are presenting their views as education professionals; writers from other backgrounds would present different perspectives.

Whether you live and work in an urban, rural, or suburban setting, we hope that you find ways to apply the ideas discussed in this issue to your school and community.

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[1] Approximately 29 percent of U.S. students are enrolled in urban schools, and approximately 20 percent of U.S. students are enrolled in rural schools. Estimates vary depending on how urbanicity categories are defined. In this case, *urban* and *rural* correspond to *central city* and *non-metropolitan,* respectively, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1998. *School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students (Update): October 1998.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce.

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Improving Urban and Rural Schools and Their Communities

Timothy Collins and Erwin Flaxman

We can't help but marvel at what is happening in many schools in cities, towns, and villages across the United States. Throughout the country, schools are establishing partnerships with community stakeholders in an effort to reform education. In both urban and rural areas, there is widespread agreement that parental engagement is a crucial component of school improvement. In some quarters, schools are seeking community engagement that includes businesses, churches, and nonprofit organizations as well as adults who do not have children in school.

In rural areas, there has always been a close connection between communities and schools. In fact, historically, resistance to certain reforms and consolidation was part of an effort to maintain local control over schools. In urban areas, however, the connection between communities and schools has seemingly been more tenuous, with more emphasis on staff professionalism than on staff relationships with community members. In both rural and urban areas, there are obstacles to school-community relationships, but these obstacles seem more pronounced in cities.

Although rural and urban areas also differ in factors such as population density and the presence or absence of natural-resource-based industries, they are fundamentally connected by the economic system, labor markets, population migration, legal and political systems, and broad cultural values. Both urban and rural communities and their schools have been caught up in several trends that have opened the way for education reform, including:

- Community and neighborhood decay following national and global economic restructuring that caused job and population declines and increased poverty.
- Changes in federal policy that increased pressure on states and local communities to deal with their own problems, raising questions about equity and local social capacity to deal with vital issues such as education, welfare reform, and workforce investment.
- State-level systemic education reform largely based on higher standards, stricter accountability, and school-based governance. These efforts put many schools at the brink of a historic moment that continues to demand that local communities change the way children are educated. In many cases, these reforms came about as a result of state-level lawsuits brought by poor urban and rural school districts.
- The realization that having relatively large numbers of poorly educated adults damages the economy, puts a heavy burden on state and federal budgets, and saps communities of their civic and economic vitality.
- A growing yearning for a sense of community, coupled with efforts to bolster citizen participation in civic life and manifested by movements to have more public input into public schools.

The problems of poor urban and rural communities may be described by a phenomenon that some social researchers call *uneven development:* the concentration of wealth and political power in certain areas, typically urban commercial districts and suburbs (Collins, 1995). *Uneven development* is a flexible term that not only describes fragmented

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rural-urban relationships but also differences in urban areas, such as impoverished center-city neighborhoods and wealthy suburbs.

Uneven development raises issues of economic and political equity that directly affect education. Rural areas and urban neighborhoods often are home to impoverished, poorly educated whites and minorities who have been marginalized from the mainstream economy, political system, and culture. Schools in these areas cannot escape the effects of this marginalization. They are often underfunded and in poor condition. Using their limited resources, they must try to educate children whose lives are often plagued by domestic violence, crime, malnutrition, frequent moves, and a host of other problems.

Despite the adverse effects of uneven development, people in many urban neighborhoods and rural communities are working hard to improve their schools and communities. This effort is gathering momentum and has become more visible in the past few years. The changes don't always come easily. It is difficult to put schools—already pressed by reforms in curriculum, governance, and finance—into the role of community building. Some people, many of them educators, don't want to change or don't know how to change.

However, the reforms are happening, led by citizens and educators who are countering social problems by finding new ways to employ local resources (supplemented by state and federal resources) to create better schools and communities. Their diligence inspires hope that all children, regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, race, or ethnic status, will receive a high-quality education.

Despite the increasingly global economy, the education of children remains a local matter. Of course, schools cannot completely mediate the shocks brought about by uneven development, but they can be a positive force in the community. Meanwhile, communities have an essential role in helping to meet the agenda of school reform. School-community engagement is essential to more effective use of the time, talents, and energy of school and community stakeholders. The goal is to improve the quality of life now and, in the long run, sustain the community and school in the face of rapid change. Despite our difficulties, we have a golden opportunity to revitalize the school-community covenant that has been so much a part of our nation's education heritage.

Understanding the consequences of uneven development allows for the implementation of school reform models that account for the geographic nature of social inequality, whether in the city or the countryside. Instead of a one-size-fits-all reform model, efforts that deeply involve all school stakeholders can be tailored to the community or neighborhood context of schools (for example, by considering local history, economy, politics, culture, and so forth), with due consideration for regional, state, national, and international linkages.

Although the United States is already seeing more citizen involvement in school reform, the idea of school-community engagement finds tough going in some quarters. Public schools originally were more community centered, but over time they moved away from that role. As a result, many believe that public schooling has been damaged as an institution. Mathews (1996) expresses alarm at what he perceives to be the growing distance between the public and public schools. He writes:

> School issues are especially prone to be treated in isolation from other relevant community concerns, remaining narrowly focused on professional considerations. Debates over the curriculum or school discipline can be badly misdirected. A question about the curriculum may be a surrogate for a question about economic strategies, while a question about discipline in the schools may really be part of a larger question about how to maintain order in the community. Issues that are misframed this way can't be resolved because the stakeholders aren't all at the table. Issues that we might be tempted to see simply as problems within schools need to be reframed to embrace the larger context of community concerns. (P. 25)

Nonetheless, urban and rural schools continue to be extremely important to their communities, although many schools may not recognize this fact. (Rural schools are already more important to their communities than urban schools are to theirs because of the low population density and the limited number of other cultural amenities and

institutions in rural areas.) Schools have resources that are important to the life of the community, and they can benefit greatly from community partnerships that build both the school and community. Gardner (1995/1996) writes:

> First, there is no more dependable stimulus for community building than a *common task*—some objective that can only be achieved if diverse elements join in shared action. And there is hardly any common task more deeply rooted in the nation's soul than the future of our children. Second, the schools are dependably present in every American community and represent the one institution through which all must pass. And finally, creating a sense of community must begin virtually at birth—and after the crucial infant and toddler years, school is a vitally important early experience.

As part of their reform efforts, schools can play a central role in promoting democracy, leadership, citizenship, and economic empowerment not only for students but also for the wider community. Knowledge is power. Cortes (1995/1996) writes:

> I believe that it is important to understand that "public engagement" is not mobilization around fears and frustrations. Nor is it another easily-applied formula for education reform. Meaningful community engagement is a long-term process requiring a patient investment of sustained effort. Rather than being included as just one part of a strategy to improve public education, community engagement should be at the center of the effort. It is not a question of bridging the gap between the "leadership" and the community: it's a matter of making the community the leadership in education reform. (P. 26)

Many educators and other citizens will find these ideas unusual, if not out of line. They believe that schools are overwhelmed by social problems, are stretched to the limit in meeting state standards to provide a good education for children, and cannot possibly do anything about problems in the community. Yet, as the articles in this issue of *The ERIC Review* point out, there are reform models using federal, state, and locally designed programs that link school improvement with parental engagement and other community development efforts. In these cases, schools can become better citizens in their communities and can set examples for students, parents, and other stakeholders. By addressing such mutual concerns, many schools already demonstrate how reviving the bonds of school-community interdependence can improve life for a broad spectrum of citizens, especially the poor. In so doing, these schools are working to provide quality education for children that will manifest itself in the years ahead in healthy adults who will display civic pride and be economically productive.

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Although urban schools and communities differ in many ways from their rural counterparts, the survival and success of both depend on strong school-community relationships. This section of "The ERIC Review" describes the nature of these relationships in the context of the community school and discusses promising models that are being used to revitalize the school-community covenant in urban and rural settings.

The Promise of Urban Community Schooling

Erwin Flaxman

Editor's note: For more information about many of the organizations and initiatives discussed in this article, see Section 2: Initiatives and Resources *beginning on page 25.*

In a comprehensive look at the phenomenon of the full-service school, Joy Dryfoos, a national proponent and authority, pauses to reflect that it is possible to find examples of partnerships in action between schools and communities or outside agencies in almost every school, almost every day, although these partnerships will differ in their complexity, magnitude, and stability (Dryfoos, 1994). A full-service school is a school committed to serving the needs of the community; specifically, it improves the welfare of children and youth by coordinating the fragmented services necessary for the development and the educational, social, and economic success of both youth and their families. Such an engagement in the life of the community is a tradition in urban American schooling; historically, the school has been the agent of civic and moral education, the Americanization of immigrants, the preparation of youth for work, adult education, and the provision of social and health services to children and families in need. But now the urban school is assuming a different role by becoming a partner with other community members—agencies, organizations, and families—in a complex arrangement, jointly and collaboratively formed to improve the welfare of children and families and to build the capacity of the urban community to serve its own ends. The venue for this collaboration is the community school.

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The Idea of Community Education

A *community* can be thought of in several ways. It is a geographic location with purpose, the means and methods to socialize its members and develop them economically, and common patterns of social interaction and control (Willie, 2000). A community is also a body of constituents: individuals; families; agencies; businesses; schools and other governance entities; and formal and informal organizations, including service, fraternal, social, and religious organizations. Historically, educators have viewed urban communities as laden with problems that they are unable to solve without outside resources and as populated with children and families beset with a variety of social and psychological deficiencies and disabilities. From this perspective, the resources of the school should be used to meet the *needs* of the community to maintain its viability for creating educable students. But the community school as it is evolving today recognizes that the community has independent strengths and a *capacity* to use and develop its own resources to meet its own needs, both alone and in partnership with schools and other institutions and both within and outside the community.

The idea of community schooling or community education represents a public health or preventative approach to meeting the needs and developing the capacity of the community and to the school's own role as an agent and partner. It recognizes that interventions should not only affect the entire community but also be specific to the individual, family, or group that might have a disability. Interventions should also take place in real-life situations that promote the advancement of the community and are relevant to the individuals who reside there. In this approach, prevention, remedy, and development are complementary, not conflicting, strategies (Willie, 2000).

Community schooling predicates that everyone lives within a number of social worlds or communities that affect their thoughts and behavior, and that understanding this ecology will increase the effect of any remedy to a problem or any effort to develop a capacity to prevent it. For the community school, this means that parents, teachers, administrators, education leaders, policymakers, and the public need to develop insights into the influences on students' patterns of behavior beyond what they narrowly observe in the school, which is just one "community" in the life of the student (Willie, 2000). In the past, recognizing that some students are at risk for school failure, the school, often assisted by the community, developed discrete programs to counter the effects of risk (for example, pregnancy and dropout prevention programs, remedial and precollege programs, and social and health services). But just as the school is increasingly abandoning these discrete programs in favor of comprehensive school reform for improving the outcome of education, it is now forming a broad-based collaboration with the community as an equal partner, recognizing that education is a whole community affair and that the stronger the community, the greater its capacity to assume its role in education.

The Principles of Community Schooling

In the social ecology of community life, the community school serves the needs of the entire community by improving and developing it. Decker and others (1990, 2000) enumerate the following common principles or elements governing the development and maintenance of the community school:

- Self-determination, in which the members of the local community identify their needs and desires. This is especially important for parents, who now can have a greater voice and take a fuller role in their children's education.
- Self-help efforts through which people in the community both develop a capacity to solve their own problems and take a greater responsibility for their own well-being.
- The development of leadership in the community to carry out these self-help and community improvement efforts.
- The localization of programs and other efforts closest to where people live.
- The integration of the delivery of services and the maximum use of resources through collaborations of all agencies and organizations within the community to ensure that all needs are met and that all resources are used well to meet local needs.
- The inclusion of all members of the community to ensure the full development of the entire community.

- The responsiveness of public institutions with a responsibility to meet the changing needs and desires of the community.
- The provision of formal and informal lifelong education to all members of the community at all ages.

These are worthy but ambitious goals. Clearly, indigenous, informal, local community efforts are more responsive to community needs, and the community leaders have a greater knowledge of local networks than outsiders do, but distant, formal community agencies have greater resources on which the local community must depend, and their efforts often overwhelm local efforts. Moreover, local community efforts sometimes disappear because they lack funds or are not organizationally viable (Decker and others, 2000). Nevertheless, a large number of local organizations are already engaged in building collaborations (many with schools) for the good of the community, and they may be strengthened as a result.

Partnerships between educators and other community members can be viewed on a continuum: *Cooperation* is a simple working relationship created to achieve a common goal, such as providing tutoring or summer jobs to help students learn more and earn money; through *coordination*, the partners plan together and share resources to develop programs, such as creating a magnet school or school-based clinics; but with *collaboration*, the effort is more concentrated and intense because it includes broad multiagency planning and shared authority and decision making. Although most education partnerships involve parents and educators who only cooperate to carry out a joint program and to coordinate the use of their time and other resources, all education partnerships should include two-way communication, mutual support, and joint decision making and should result in enhanced learning at home and in school (Decker and others, 2000).

Community Schooling in Action

Community schooling can take various forms, depending on its goal, magnitude, and location (for example, in the school or the community). These forms are described below.

Integrated Services in the Full-Service School

The full-service school meets the need for a communitywide and multiagency approach to preventing problem behaviors in children and their families. In the 1990s, the idea of the community school was revived as a way of countering risk (for example, risk of school failure, delinquency, substance abuse, early parenthood, and parent unemployability). It has since been viewed as a way to coordinate services through new institutional arrangements in a comprehensive, collaborative, and coherent system for changing youth, families, and the social environment shared by educators; community and business leaders; and health, social services, and mental health practitioners. The school becomes a mechanism for coordinating services that are fragmented among several bureaucracies, training teachers to take a new role in the development of their students, and working cooperatively with families (Hamburg, 1994). Although strongly advocated by some educators and community leaders, this broadened mission of education moves schooling in a direction many educators are not prepared to go, especially with the current pressure to raise academic standards. Arguably, however, coordinated services can reduce the problem behaviors that prevent students from meeting academic standards and can be a vehicle for engaging families in the effort.

Full-service schools vary in comprehensiveness and depth. Some schools have only one component, provide only one service, or engage in only one collaboration or partnership; others are more complex, provide more services, and involve more parts of the community. *Full service* then is defined by the particular school or community itself. Fortunately, almost all schools can plan and participate in the governance of coordinated services, especially when the services are based in the school building itself (services are typically provided outside of the school, but ideally close by).

Such schools provide various health services—including mental health, social, and family and student education support services—through a number of venues, groups, programs, and partnerships, including

- School-based dental, health, and mental health centers, mostly for students but sometimes for their families as well.
- School teams made up of student services personnel, the principal, and teachers that ensure that the

needs of individual students and their families are being met.

- Psychosocial counseling, social skills training, and mentoring programs.
- Resource centers and literacy programs for parents and families.
- Afterschool, remedial, dropout prevention, stay-in-school incentive, and precollege programs for students.
- University-school partnerships for teacher training and family programs.
- Business partnerships to help make students more employable.
- Community service programs.

A Community School Reform Model

The spirit of the full-service school as a school reform model is the basis of the widely recognized School Development Program, a comprehensive model created in 1968 by Dr. James Comer, a child psychiatrist at Yale University. The program develops the personal, social, emotional, and moral strengths necessary for children to achieve in school. According to the program's philosophy, this development can best be accomplished through strong relationships with significant adults in the child's immediate environment (such as parents, teachers, and members of the community), which bridge the social divide between parents and schools that exists in low-income, multiracial neighborhoods. [Few of the other comprehensive school reform models consider the child's development so essential to school success.] These models attempt to reform the education core of schooling: organization and management, curriculum, teaching practices and behavior, monitoring of student progress and performance, and so forth. Almost all research-based school reform models, however, create structures or provide opportunities for parent involvement (Desimone, 2000). But in the School Development Program, the child is the locus of the reform, while in most of the other reform programs, the school is the locus.

In the School Development Program, a student and staff support team (SSST) comprising teachers, school psychologists, social workers, special education teachers, counselors, and other support staff helps a school planning and management team see the mental health implications of its actions to ensure that it supports students' development and learning in a positive environment of mutual respect. SSST also works with individual teachers to help students with particular learning or behavior problems. SSST members are expected to practice no-fault problem solving and consensus decision making and to collaborate with other school staff and the other team. The School Development Program also establishes a parent team so that parents can be involved in the program at any level they wish, including participating in the school planning and management team (Herman and others, 1999).

School-to-Work in the Community School

In another model of community schooling, the community and the school form an alliance to create opportunities for youth to make the transition from school to work. Through this partnership, schools, the business community, and local social agencies work together to meet the common goal of making education more relevant to students by allowing them to explore different careers and, most important, to obtain from school and the workplace the skills needed to succeed in the job world.

Since 1994, the U.S. government, through the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, has supported this model through the states. The three core elements of the school-to-work program demonstrate how community collaboration works to help students build careers leading to a viable economic future in a changing workplace and global economy. The *school* provides instruction based on industry standards and learned from collaborating with local businesses; the *workplace* provides work experience, training, and mentoring to students based on employers' knowledge of the cognitive and social development of students, which in turn is learned from working with schools; and the *larger community* uses agencies to provide activities such as mentor training, apprenticeship placement, special courses, and career advice to connect the school and the workplace.

Community Youth Development

In a broad-based community youth development effort, America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth has evolved as a national initiative, supported by the executive branch of the U.S. government, that works to ensure that youth have the resources necessary to become successful adults. At the level of the individual community, the initiative engages all levels of government, business, public, private, nonprofit, and community organizations to provide youth with mentoring, safe places in the community during nonschool hours, job skills for current and future employment, and community service opportunities. Such a strategy is considered a way to serve the needs of youth through support from the community; schools and families cannot meet these needs alone.

In action, America's Promise

- Creates a community team responsible for organizing community resources and targeting them to at least 10 percent of the youth.
- Secures commitments from all sectors.
- Establishes a point of contact responsible for informing America's Promise of community activities.
- Monitors local progress in achieving the purposes of the program.

It also supports the Schools of Promise collaboration by helping school-community partnerships form an organizational school site team (made up of youth, parents, schools, social service agencies, local businesses, community-based organizations, and a "promise coordinator"), and it seeks resources and tracks the accomplishments of the schools (Decker and others, 2000).

The community school has other programs and mechanisms for engaging itself and other institutions in a collaboration to strengthen their capacity, both alone and together, to help youth develop—for example, through after-school programs, community service education activities, and youth anti-violence programs. These and other collaborative efforts, and support from neighborhood and community institutions and organizations, can affect youth positively by giving them a sense of empowerment because they feel valued by the community and are given a chance to contribute to it; providing boundaries and expectations that are supported and reinforced by the community; helping them develop a sense of how to use time constructively in the community and at home; and providing them with internal assets such as a commitment to learning and academic productivity, positive values, social competencies, and a positive identity (Benson, 1997; Starkman, Scales, and Roberts, 1999).

Family-School Partnerships

Arguably, the strongest direct link between the school and the community is being forged by parents or other responsible family members and schools to improve the academic outcomes and social development of the children and youth for whom they are commonly responsible. Today, purposeful efforts to involve parents and families in the education of their children are becoming as much a part of schooling as curriculum and teaching, school management, student assessment, or student services. Increasingly, educators are becoming convinced of the value of involving parents in the formal education of their children.

The federal government is a strong advocate of increasing the direct role of families and communities in schools. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) established the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education (PFIE) to raise student achievement and improve schools by building alliances among businesses, community organizations, families, and schools and by promoting family-school relationships. It also works closely with such efforts as the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, a network of education associations committed to strengthening the role of parents in education.

However, the strongest federal effort to support family-school partnerships is through the requirements that schools and districts must meet to receive Title I funds. Title I of the reauthorized Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 requires that local schools and districts form compacts for family-school education partnerships to improve student achievement. The parent involvement provisions of Title I mandate that parents be involved in school policy-making at both the school and district levels and share the responsibility for bringing about the high academic achievement of students, and that funds be used to develop the capacity of both educators and parents for a productive collaboration. This means that schools have to examine their parent and family involvement practices and policies and come up with innovative programs. The legislation specifically requires local education authorities to reserve funds for such activities as family literacy and parenting skills education. It also requires schools to develop a written policy that describes the responsibility of both parents and schools to collaborate in helping students reach appropriate achievement levels and meet high academic standards. In short, the provisions make parent involvement an education policy, not just a vague goal, in the many schools and districts educating low-income, low-achieving students; give accountability and responsibility for student education outcomes to both parents and educators; and supply

resources to build a capacity for the partnership. In addition, because these compacts are being created in unprecedented numbers, many argue that it is critical to learn how and whether they are realizing their goals as a vehicle for continuous improvement and school reform early on, while they are in action, so that if necessary they can be redesigned and the course of the implementation can be altered.

A substantial "idea book," recently developed by ED's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (Funkhouser, Gonzales, and Moles, 1997), presents a number of practical parent involvement strategies based on the experiences of 20 local school and district Title I programs for K–12 students in urban, rural, and suburban areas. The strategies were collected by telephone interviews with school staff and parents and, very important, through focus group interviews with parents who spoke directly about what is needed to overcome barriers to parent involvement and to fully engage families in their children's education. The strategies were also derived from a review of both research on parent involvement and expert recommendations. Specific strategies include

- Overcoming time and resource constraints (for example, through home-school liaisons and the use of parent coordinators and volunteers to handle time-consuming, routine tasks; released time and extra compensation for teachers; holding parent conferences near the home rather than just at school; and providing transportation and child care services so that parents can attend evening and weekend parent workshops and other school-related events).
- Providing parents and school staff involved in collaborative efforts with the information and training that historically they both have lacked, which can overcome their misperceptions of each other's attitudes and motives.
- Offering parents various workshops, classes, and other opportunities, often through family resource centers, to further develop their parenting skills (especially for supporting learning at home) and other skills (for example, literacy, including computer literacy) and to prepare them to take a role in school decision making.
- Devising mechanisms for keeping parents regularly informed about school affairs.
- Developing and maintaining professional development activities in schools to train staff in the practice of parent involvement and, very important, to remove any misperceptions and stereotypes they may have about parents and families, which could interfere with forging effective partnerships.
- Restructuring schools to support parent involvement by making them less hierarchical and bureaucratic and more responsive to family needs and to create new organizational structures that make parents full partners in school decision making.
- Bridging family-school differences resulting from language and cultural differences or the misperception that parents with little formal education cannot be full partners in their children's education (for example, by including organized efforts to promote cultural understanding).
- Drawing on external agencies such as local businesses, social and health agencies, and colleges and universities to support the partnerships.
- Seeking district and state assistance in the form of policies and funding to support training and services that can contribute to effective family-school partnerships.

The federal government has issued some guidelines and suggestions to determine the success of the compacts (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). For example, baseline data on student achievement need to be collected at the time the compact is put in place. Later, data on comparative performance can be collected to determine whether a particular school is doing as well as or better than others, as well as data for assessing absolute performance to determine whether the school is meeting or exceeding its own desired level of performance. Baseline data can be obtained from school profiles, administrative records, surveys, and focus groups; performance data can be obtained from school records and narrative reports. Moreover, according to the government's guidelines, when assessing the effect of the compacts, the partners need to agree on which results to measure and should concentrate on those that the compacts can influence. The agreed-upon results must always be related to students' learning and their meeting academic standards; thus, it is recommended in

analyzing the findings that the data be disaggregated to show how particular student groups are achieving. Such valuable data can also be used to report the effects of Title I and the parent-school compact to the local community as well as to chart changes.

Barriers to Effective Partnerships

There is universal agreement about the value of family-school partnerships; however, these partnerships are not always formed without conflict and misunderstandings, which reduce their effect on student welfare and create bad feeling, nor have they been critically examined well enough to indicate the direction for future policy and practice.

Despite the support of federal and state governments, public agencies, and the private sector, no strategy for effective family involvement in the school can succeed unless the principal engages in the collaboration and exercises the leadership necessary for bringing it into being. Traditionally, few principals have been trained to develop and maintain collaborations, especially for working with parents and families and sharing the responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of schooling with them. Decker and others (2000) argue that both principals and teachers who are actively part of the school side of the collaboration need highly developed listening and communication skills; must respect diversity, build consensus, and motivate others; must be able to take risks and manage conflict; and must be decisive, reflective, empowering, and flexible. In addition, the relationship between families and the school has to be credible and characterized by shared concerns; arrive at a consensus of goals and activities; and build trust and share decisions among all members in the collaboration, especially about outcomes that can be met and evaluated early.

Sometimes the closer families are to public schools, the more regard they have for them and the more willing they are to support them, although sometimes they also become more critical of them. However, educators have not always wanted families involved in professional decisions and thus have not developed partnerships with the parents of their students, even under legislative mandates. Teachers and administrators typically are not prepared to involve parents in schooling because they have received little training in how to do it. For example, there are few certification requirements for school staff in the area of parent involvement despite its publicized place in current school reform efforts. In addition, many education professionals are skeptical about the contribution that poorly educated, low-income, immigrant, African-American, and Hispanic parents can make to schooling. In turn, many parents say that they want respect when they work with school staff, and they are reluctant to work with the staff without it. This may explain why, despite the rhetoric about the importance of parent involvement and family-school collaborations, most school staff do not consider them a priority. Recognizing this problem, PFIE organized a conference on preparing teachers to work with families. It also commissioned a review of family-school partnerships and promising practices for teacher preparation (Shartrand and others, 1997).

Increased Knowledge About Effective Parent Involvement

Because research has demonstrated the importance of the home literacy environment, parental stimulation (mostly the mother's) of the child's language development, the nature of the parent-child attachment, and parent involvement in preschool and early intervention programs in the child's development, many people have come to believe that parent involvement is essential to children's academic success in formal schooling at all levels (see, for example, Snow and others, 1991; Tizard, Schofield, and Hasten, 1982). Schools in which parents are meaningfully involved in the formal education of their children will outperform schools without strong parent involvement programs, and the teachers will have higher expectations of families and children—especially poor, low-achieving students with the lowest prior achievement. (The best results are in programs that make efforts to bridge cultural differences.) Specifically, research has shown that parent involvement influences the achievement of these students in several directions: Children whose families are involved with the school earn higher grades and score better on tests, attend school more regularly, complete more homework assignments, graduate at higher rates and go on to higher education more frequently, and have more positive attitudes toward schooling than those with less-involved families (Henderson and Berla, 1994; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). A recent report adds that children with highly involved fathers receive better grades and are suspended less often than those with less-involved fathers (U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000).

However, one must be cautious about believing that parent involvement alone produces these outcomes, because it often accompanies other efforts to improve the quality of schooling that these students receive. These efforts can include working to raise the quality of curriculum and instruction, staff participation in program design, principal leadership, frequent monitoring of

student academic achievement, and accountability mechanisms. Arguably, though, parent involvement is most effective in schools that are already aggressively reforming their practices for improving students' education. By becoming involved in their children's schools, parents will likely experience changes in their attitudes, aspirations, expectations, and behaviors—for example, they may provide more help with homework and attend more parent-teacher conferences. Researchers also need to consider how parent involvement changes parenting style and family interaction and, in turn, how these factors might affect the quality of education in the school, where parent involvement is only one component in a comprehensive provision of reforms.

With the limited amount of funds available for schools, policymakers and program designers need to know which particular parent involvement interventions are effective. Baker and Soden (1998) point out that schools engage in a smorgasbord of efforts—for example, home-school communications, home learning activities, and using parents as volunteers or decisionmakers. They argue that researchers need to identify both the unique and overlapping benefits of each type of intervention, particularly the different benefits of parent involvement at home and in school. These interventions are not interchangeable, and they have different goals, styles, and barriers that can either inhibit or lead to successful education outcomes for children. In addition, parents' engagement in their children's education benefits their own development (for example, literacy skills), attitude toward their children, and self-esteem; this, in turn, benefits their children's development.

The question about whether parent involvement needs to be comprehensive and fully collaborative looms over every decision that program planners must make. Generally, the planners believe that more is better, but it is possible that only discrete interventions have any effect and that parent involvement can reach a saturation point. It may also be possible that different types of parent involvement interventions effect differences in the quality of schooling and student achievement. As of yet, there are no studies that provide answers to these questions. It is also not known how the larger community benefits from community schooling—for example, how the community's social, health, and human service delivery systems are strengthened by a viable community school, especially when the services are coordinated. Here too more research is needed, especially to determine the direction and nature of the influence.

The School in the Community

By their very nature, schools, homes, and communities are different social organizations. Professional educators do not always recognize that communities are complex social arrangements of families, friends, neighborhoods and associations, clubs, civic groups, local enterprises, churches, temples, ethnic associations, unions, local government, and local media (Annie E. Casey Foundation, n.d.). Within such communities are what the Annie E. Casey Foundation calls *natural helpers* who can act as a liaison and a bridge between schools and families in the community. Natural helpers—professionals who live and work in the community, such as people who work with youth, day care center staff, and community health workers—are identified as part of the community, frequently associated with one or more community organizations, and often personally respected and influential. Clearly, these natural helpers understand their neighborhoods and are perceived as role models in the community. They are part of formal and informal networks within the community and have a greater stake in the well-being and future of the community than professionals who work in the community but do not reside there.

Natural helpers also have different and necessary skills for advising, helping, and engaging others in the community in any effort and, more important, are likely to provide both support and professional services to parents and families (Annie E. Casey Foundation, n.d.). Nonresident professionals do not always have the understanding and information needed to create strategies that are relevant to the conditions of specific families and communities, in part because they do not see an individual parent or child (or an entire family) within the physical, social, or cultural context of the community in which he or she lives. Consequently, these professionals need to seek the help of the natural helpers, who are key informants about the operations of social systems within the community.

Nonresident professionals should not assume that they must do all the work in partnership with parents and families: Members of the community, as full partners, have the capacity to improve their well-being. If nonresident professionals can partner with parents and families to share responsibilities and accountabilities, each group bringing its mutually acknowledged strengths and skills, the partnership will have an exponential effect on the outcomes. These professionals should particularly realize that recognizing language differences can be a beginning in creating the conditions for such a partnership. They and members of the community often use different concepts and language to

think and talk about the same thing; each uses a jargon that the other needs to accept and try to understand. It will be very unfortunate if community members continue to believe that schools and other agencies are just impersonal bureaucracies with useless and arcane rules and that nonresident professionals view community members as weak, pathological, and in need of their services.

The Industrial Areas Foundation: A Case in Point of Community Mobilization

Many feel that to fulfill the promise of community schooling, the community must mobilize itself to gain power and develop strategies for self-help and self-determination to improve the lives of its members and the education of its children. The Industrial Areas Foundation, founded by Saul Alinsky, is a model being used in a number of communities nationwide. The foundation is a national network of broad-based, multiethnic, interfaith organizations in poor and moderate-income communities. It marshals political strength, usually through indigenous community organizations and churches, so that individual parents feel part of a group or community that has the capacity and power to effect change in their communities and schools. It breaks down parents' sense of isolation and their dependency on professional expertise and goodwill so that they no longer see themselves as at risk but rather as capable in all aspects of community and family life (Cortes, 1993).

To achieve these ends, Industrial Areas Foundation workers determine how common issues and concerns are defined by parents and educators and analyze how power is distributed and used within the community. To create a sense of common purpose, for example, the foundation helps educators and parent leaders in a local school engage in neighborhood walks and forums open to everyone so that all individual and group concerns will be voiced and that any actions taken will result in a fuller development of the

community. The foundation's philosophy particularly aims to change the distribution of decision-making power in the school; instead of professionals having unilateral power to make or not make changes, the school vests power in the parent-school relationship as the venue for making decisions. The development of parents' capacity to help themselves through a collaborative relationship with educators, it is felt, will result in their assuming greater responsibilities and taking on more challenging tasks, especially after they realize that they are able to use their power and have the capacity to achieve change (Giles, 1998).

Conclusion

Although, undeniably, most schools have allied themselves with families and the larger community to advance the welfare and education of students and the community in general—almost all current reform models have a community involvement component—the reality does not always match the rhetoric. Community schooling is still an ideal waiting to be realized. Neither the community nor the school is yet fully prepared for the alliance in parent-school partnerships, and just as some educators would merely want families to support the school's agenda without becoming involved in its decision making, some immigrant and ethnic-group families wonder why the school does not fully assume its historic responsibility and accountability for educating their children because they themselves feel unable to devote time to the workings of the school and often do not recognize why they must. Community schooling has actually been criticized by those who argue that it confuses the legitimate role of the family to rear children and the school to educate them (Varenne, 1997). And more dramatically, home schooling indicts the school for failing as an institution for both educating children and protecting their health and welfare and brings both functions to the home.

But even in schools with desirable integrated services and widespread education support from the community, much of the necessary cooperation and collaboration between schools and agencies and businesses has not yet been institutionalized and has fallen victim to bureaucratic entanglements and the vagaries of funding. Some programs must even depend on the goodwill and sustained interest of the partners, which sadly sometimes wane. Yet most people are convinced that community schooling, especially with active partnerships between families and schools, increases the chance that more educated students reared in viable communities will be graduated from the schools and able to go on to

postsecondary or higher education and careers—an end desired by the family, school, and community alike, despite their problems, misgivings, and criticisms.

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Rural Schools and Communities: Perspectives on Interdependence

Timothy Collins

Editor's note: For more information about many of the programs and initiatives discussed in this article, see Section 2: Initiatives and Resources *beginning on page 25.*

> There is scarcely a single phase of country life in which the country school may not become a vitalizing factor. The boys' and girls' clubs should begin there. The study of farm production, of marketing, of sources of supply, of farm accounts, and of road and telephone construction should be a part of the work of the country school. But this work should be extended over the social interests of the community also. The knowledge of one's environment should include one's economic and social as well as one's physical environment. (Carver, 1915, p. 127)

Introduction

Strengthening the relationship between rural schools and their communities has been a recurring theme in rural education reform. Early in the 20th century, rural educators—faced with the challenges of nationwide school reform, massive out-migration that fed the nation's growing urban manufacturing base, and a changing global economy—passionately discussed the interdependence of rural schools and communities.

In the 1950s, rural educators resumed this discussion as communities faced a new wave of out-migration spurred by agricultural mechanization. Other changes affecting rural communities at that time included sprawling suburbanization, growth in rural manufacturing and services, and further restructuring of the global economy after World War II (cf. American Association of School Administrators, 1951; Collins, 1995).

Discussion of rural schools and communities re-emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Once again, calls for national education reform coincided with national and global economic changes that forever altered rural America's farming, timbering, and mining communities. The rural school-community debate simmered during the 1980s, culminating in the rural school movement of the 1990s (cf. Theobald and Curtiss, 2000).

Current momentum in improving relationships between rural schools and their communities may continue for some time to come. However, if experts are correct about the breadth and depth of changes under way in rural areas, rural citizens today face challenges much different from those in the past. Deteriorating conditions and the erosion of communities in some rural areas have led observers such as Davidson (1996) to discuss the emergence of the "rural ghetto." Other communities are experiencing an influx of immigrants, which has challenged schools to serve students with different cultures and needs than those they were accustomed to seeing (Huang, 1999). Meanwhile, rural schools face costly demands for accountability and higher standards with few additional resources (cf. Collins, 1999).

During the past 15 years or so, a rural school movement has emerged, led nationally by groups such as the Rural School and Community Trust (formerly the Annenberg Rural Challenge), the National Rural Education Association, and Organizations Concerned About Rural Education. Numerous state and local organizations have helped practitioners and community members work on new models for school-community partnerships. The U.S. Department of Education's Regional Educational Laboratories and the ERIC system also have played a role in this movement, including developing new models.

What does this mean for practitioners? A review of the rural education literature suggests at least four trends:

- A healthy relationship between rural communities and their schools is crucial to school effectiveness and the communities' quality of life.

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- Although it is impossible for rural communities to alter global changes that put them at risk, they can have broad-based local discussions; develop agreed-upon policies; and pursue educational, civic, and economic activities that enhance their sustainability and growth.
- Rural students must be prepared to work, learn, and live well, not only as participants in the global economy but also as citizens in their own communities.
- Rural schools, as central institutions in rural life, must assume a role in community economic development.

In short, the literature suggests that the mission of rural schools is changing.

Getting Past the Past

Historically, rural education reform has been difficult due to rural-urban antagonisms, the concentration of wealth and political power in urban areas, conflicting values, and social inequality. Generally, rural citizens have not liked the results of consolidation (that is, closing a community school and merging students with those at another school); urban schools; and urban education models, which many see as "one size fits all." Reformers seeking consolidation as an answer to perceived problems with rural education have been telling rural residents for many years that reforms would increase

academic achievement and therefore the success of their children (Sher and Tompkins, 1977). However, the promise of new buildings, sophisticated equipment, and more course offerings has not always been realized. Many rural communities still hesitate to engage in school reform because the expenditures increase the out-migration of talented youth who end up in cities and suburbs (Stern, 1994).

In general, rural residents believe that education reform, stemming from the urban orientation of state policymakers, has come at the expense of local control (Tompkins, 1977). Too often, these policymakers have portrayed rural communities in a negative light—as backward, uneducated, and opposed to progress. These stereotypes have damaged the reputation of rural communities and denied their central ideals of personal relationships, small-scale organization, high quality of life, and democratic ideals and practices (cf. Sher and Tompkins, 1977). Stereotypes have also failed to recognize other ideals of rural education—including small classes, personalized instruction, cooperative learning, opportunities for student participation in school activities, and parent and community involvement—that focus on the whole child. Of course, rural areas have never had a golden age of peace, virtue, and prosperity for all. Yet traditional ideals and values are powerful and persistent, offering a reference point for building and rebuilding rural schools and communities (cf. Miller and Hahn, 1997).

Some of the current excitement about practical models for rural schools and their communities resides in these long-cherished ideals. In this sense, the ideals are a source of potential energy, of unfulfilled promise. Although rural schools continue to be community focal points, rural economic decline, coupled with reform pressures, heightens the urgency of seeking out new school-community relationships to improve schools and strengthen communities.

Schools and Community Development

Social capital is a term that gets a lot of use in some circles. Coleman (1988) believes that *social capital*—defined as the features of social organization such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate interactions in a community—is a productive resource. Swanson (1991) reconceptualizes *social capital*, calling it *social infrastructure*. In his reconceptualization, Swanson suggests that when social infrastructure is working without constraints, it can enhance community development efforts. However, as Collins and Dewees (1999) point out, local power structures that resist change may inhibit social infrastructure, which in turn inhibits community development. As a result, rural communities may have residents whose diverse talents and energies are untapped.

A key feature and product of social infrastructure is *community agency*—the ability to act to achieve collective goals. The notion of community agency suggests that social relationships can affect economic outcomes in significant ways. The ability of a community to recognize opportunities, make choices, and act on these choices may enhance the productivity of local resources and ultimately affect local development outcomes. A community's ability to recognize opportunities and act on them is related to the qualities of local social infrastructure, such as the willingness to act cooperatively (cf. Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). A decision to invest in education is crucial to developing the social infrastructure of a community (cf. Grisham and Gurwitt, 1999).

Sher (1977) was probably the first person in almost a generation to suggest that rural schools are vital to local economic and community development (cf. Howley and Eckman, 1997). Haas and Nachtigal (1998) tap deep historic and philosophical roots of education, environment, and community when they suggest that students need to learn to live well by incorporating an understanding of ecology, civic involvement, economics, a sense of spiritual connection, and community living. Their holistic approach assumes that schools are intended to serve the community by helping improve the lives of students *in* the community.

Schools pass knowledge across generations while building communities for the future. Haas (1994) believes that sustainable education reform should

- Build on the strength and knowledge of local people and provide them with the tools to manage effective change.
- Be diverse in meeting unique community needs.
- Have at its center the support of an individual or small group that builds on and pushes for reform.
- Recognize limits and operate within them.
- Be multifaceted and attend to issues of purpose, content, rules, roles, and responsibilities.
- Be inclusive and involve all community members.
- Be grounded in research on how people learn and are most effectively taught.
- Be driven by a fundamental trust in people's capacity to identify and celebrate local strengths and resources.

Lawrence (1998) writes that the fundamental characteristics of a sustainable community are economic security, ecological integrity, quality of life, and empowerment and responsibility. Nurturing these characteristics within a rural school can forge stronger links to the community, strengthen the local economic base, encourage students to live within the community, and increase the likelihood that the school will be adequately funded. Lawrence believes that a school can increase the economic security of its community by encouraging local and national businesses to set up branches within the school, by teaching entrepreneurialism, by establishing small student-run ventures, and by offering local and state incentives to attract business partnerships.

According to Lawrence (1998), a school can contribute to ecological integrity by reflecting the culture, history, and materials of the community. A school adds to the quality of life as defined by the community. It is important for the school to empower students with a sense of responsibility and decision making. Strategies for creating sustainable schools include

- Responding to differences in rural communities.
- Taking advantage of outside expertise.
- Being sensitive to building design, construction, condition, and outfitting.
- Broadening the search for resources and ideas beyond traditional thinking.
- Finding community assets.
- Investigating local, state, and federal funding and partnerships.

Miller and Hahn (1997) provide case studies of three rural communities that have engaged students in community and economic development. The programs involved students in community development and entrepreneurial activities and used mentors to help students gain real-world experience and develop academic skills. One issue that emerges from these studies is whether programs developed in a particular locality are transferable. As Hobbs (1987) points out, specific ideas about what has worked in some places are useful. They are not as important, however, as the intention of the school and community to become active partners in improving the school and the community's quality of life. The school-community partnership should build on the context of local conditions and ideals to provide local solutions for local problems. According to Miller and Hahn (1997), school-community partnerships are successful "if a new and empowering partnership between the community and the school has been created that can meaningfully impact the lives of rural youth and adults over an extended period of time" (p. 81). Such partnerships should have a positive effect on student achievement, improve the quality of life in the community, and help students to make successful transitions to adulthood.

The literature on integrated school improvement and community development approaches is primarily descriptive and anecdotal, with extremely

limited evaluative data (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1999). Problems with evaluating school-community approaches include their complexity and the length of time these partnerships take to be implemented. Groups such as the Rural School and Community Trust, which have made a long-term commitment to rural schools across the country, are focusing on this blind spot by building evaluations into their work.

Models for a New Start

Miller (1995) lays out three potentially interrelated models that are mutually beneficial to the school and the community: (1) the school as a community center, a lifelong learning center, and a vehicle for delivering numerous services; (2) the community as curriculum, emphasizing the community in all of its complexities as part of students' learning activities in the classroom; and (3) the school as a developer of entrepreneurial skills (cf. Nachtigal, 1994; Hobbs, 1987; Sher, 1977). A fourth model (Odasz, 1999) suggests the role of new technologies in building and preserving the community while linking students to the rest of the world. These models are described in the following sections.

Model 1: Schools As Community Centers

From the outset, public schools across rural America have been community ventures. The tradition of schools as community centers is a long one, with as yet untapped potential. In this model, schools become central to the intergenerational process of building community agency. Schools go beyond serving students to become a resource for the broader public. For example, schools can:

- Provide public space for meetings and other activities.
- Promote lifelong learning by establishing a learning resource center and offering adult education and literacy classes (for example, GED classes and computer classes).
- Lead the networking, coordination, and delivery of family health services and other social services that enhance the community's social infrastructure.
- Provide space for businesses to train employees or help businesses with their training.

The Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (1986) offers additional suggestions for turning schools into community centers, including opening schools early in winter so people can walk and exercise, sharing kitchen facilities with providers of food services for the community, and using school buses to transport the elderly.

The school-as-community-center model has been used in a number of states. For example, Kentucky's 1990 education reform set up Family Resource and Youth Services Centers in schools, with the long-term goal of bolstering student achievement. Each center has its own blend of program components depending on its location, available services, local need, and community input.

Kentucky's Family Resource Centers serve elementary schools. Mandated components are preschool child care for children ages 2 and 3, afterschool child day care, parenting training, parent and child education, support and training for child day-care providers, and health services or health services referrals. Youth Services Centers serve secondary schools. Mandated components are referrals to health and social services; employment counseling, training, and placement; summer and part-time job development; drug and alcohol abuse counseling; and family crisis and mental health counseling.

In Kentucky schools with Family Resource Centers and Youth Services Centers, teachers report improved student-peer relationships and academic performance, and parents report greater satisfaction and involvement

with the schools (Kentucky Department of Education, 2000).

McChesney (1996) points out obstacles to the school-as-community-center model, including funding, turf considerations among the agencies and groups, establishing effective delivery systems for services, involving all stakeholders, and bureaucratic issues.

Model 2: Community As Curriculum

Miller (1995) also suggests the use of community as curriculum (cf. Wigginton, 1985). A place-based curriculum can provide an ideal bridge between the classroom and community development. Developing a place-based curriculum involves listing community assets that can be used in the classroom. These assets can be a springboard for positive partnerships and actions. A place-based curriculum can also help the community build a "culture of education" so both students and adults will become lifelong learners, with the school at the center of lifelong learning activities. Student learning is not limited to what goes on inside the classroom but extends into the community to embrace ecology, economic and civic involvement, spirituality, and living well in the community (Haas and Nachtigal, 1998).

Place-based curricula are feasible; in fact, they are already being implemented in a number of areas, with funding and guidance from the Rural School and Community Trust (Scott, 1999). In addition, the trust has begun to document success stories from five years of work in approximately 700 U.S. schools (Scott, 1999). Schools tend to be the largest employers in rural areas and have the best facilities for focusing learning energies. However, although rural schools may be a major repository of learning resources, they are not the sole repository. Rural residents have considerable expertise in rural life and work, adapting to changing times and changes in community life over the years. Both the school and the community gain from leveraging resources (cf. Lambert, 1996).

The beauty of a place-based curriculum is that it plays out differently in each community. However, there are common themes. Elder (1998) suggests four themes of place-based education:

1. Attentiveness to students' home landscapes, which offers a solid grounding for interdisciplinary study.
2. Convergence of natural sciences and the arts through drawing, writing, identifying plants and animals, and studying processes of biological change.
3. Time spent outdoors doing systematic, experimental fieldwork that fosters exploration and attentiveness.
4. Human connections to the land that emerge out of exploring the cultural aspects of the community's relationship to its natural history across the generations.

In Iowa, the Sense of Place Symposium noted that the essence of a place-based curriculum framework is based on a partnership among the school, community, and students to develop stewardship for the area, empowerment for the future, and an appreciation for heritage. The curriculum can enhance students' skills by building awareness, understanding, and appreciation of their area. It also can help students understand the place of their community in the larger world (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1995).

Place-based curriculum projects are numerous and varied. For example, rural schoolchildren in Alabama recorded the wisdom and life experiences of their elders and set the words to music. They created a compact disc, *Here I Stand: Elders' Wisdom, Children's Song,* which was then distributed by Smithsonian/Folkways. In addition, students wrote community histories, ran small businesses, tested local water, started community day-care programs, created children's literature, ran photography labs, produced plays, published community newspapers, built solar-heated houses, and started organic gardening and marketing projects (Lambert, 1996).

Rural service learning is a specialized form of place-based curriculum that moves beyond community service. Students in service-learning projects apply classroom skills to solve community problems as part of their course work. The work not only instills a sense of citizenship and a sense of responsibility for the community but also gives students practical skills in thinking about, conceptualizing, creating, planning, leading, and managing projects (cf. Kansas State University, Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development, 1995).

Model 3: Schools As Developers of Entrepreneurial Skills

Miller's (1995) third model puts rural schools in the role of developing students' entrepreneurial skills. Hobbs (1987) suggests that small businesses, including knowledge-based enterprises, have much potential to create new jobs, especially if they find the right market

niche. It is essential to create new networks and partnerships to support the model. Rural schools need to provide sound basic education, train students to be innovative, teach multiple skills, and enable students to work together in teams to solve problems.

School entrepreneurial programs are based on the premise that students who learn to earn their keep in the community are less likely to out-migrate. Entrepreneurial programs can be part of place-based curricula. Collins (1999) notes that entrepreneurial students can prosper in the rural community by becoming business owners, creating a new segment of a revitalized middle class (one that is not necessarily farm based) that supports lifelong community education and development while promoting sustainable economic diversity.

Gold and Williams (1998) point out that entrepreneurialism can be important in the vocational training of adolescents with disabilities. They note that entrepreneurial options such as school-based businesses, internships, and apprenticeships may remedy many of the educational, personal, and rural issues that can contribute to poor vocational preparation and reduced independence for such students.

One of the oldest entrepreneurial programs developed out of Sher's (1977) work. Rural Entrepreneurship Through Action Learning (REAL) was founded in the early 1980s and now operates in more than 450 institutions in 33 states. The REAL program includes an experiential course taught for credit in high schools (usually grades 11–12) and community colleges and to the public through community organizations. REAL students explore

small-business ownership by assessing their personal abilities and goals, analyzing the community, identifying business ideas that meet local needs, writing plans for a chosen venture, and opening their own enterprises. These enterprises "graduate" into the community with the students who created them. In elementary and middle schools, REAL fosters career awareness and student involvement in the community. Development of a REAL program requires a partnership among the school, the community, and REAL enterprises (Larson and others, 1997).

Model 4: Technology in Schools and Communities

Rapidly changing technologies make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of this "moving frontier" in education. Important issues have emerged already (Collins and Dewees, n.d.). The complex relationship between technology and forms of social inequality such as the concentration of wealth and political power in urban areas is the basis for current discussions about the so-called digital divide. These discussions focus on access, not only to affordable telephone service, but also to computers and networks (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1998).

Despite technological innovations, little has changed in most classrooms since the 19th century. Teaching continues to be based on a pedagogy of lecturing and recitation; teachers have been slow to adopt computer technology (cf. McGraw, Blair, and Ross, 1999). Two unanswered questions are: Will the technological revolution change teaching and learning in the classroom? Will new technology such as the World Wide Web have a positive effect on student achievement?

These questions are linked by differences in the rate of change. Rural areas tend to lag behind cities and suburbs in obtaining access to the Internet, and different teachers adopt new technologies at different times. Laws and policies already recognize these issues. For example, the federal E-Rate program subsidizes school access to the World Wide Web in an attempt to erase inequities caused by location or lack of fiscal resources. Professional development can also help teachers adapt technology to their classrooms (Collins and Dewees, n.d.). Despite formidable barriers, some rural schools in states such as Alaska, Nebraska, and Wyoming have been in the forefront of technological innovations in recent years (Market Data Retrieval, 2000).

The World Wide Web may affect schools differently than earlier technologies have. Already, 30.3 percent of rural residents use local school computers to access the Web, compared with a national average of 21.8 percent (Strover, 1999). Having access to technology means that rural schools may become even more important community focal points (Collins and Dewees, n.d.). Teachers and administrators need to rethink the role of their school in the community.

Unlike television and other earlier technologies, the Web requires active participation. Understanding how to use the Web could help rural youth become the technological leaders in their communities, enabling them to teach one another, their teachers, and other adults how to use computers and the Web. In addition, the Web can help students become involved in entrepreneurial activities and community networking, thus helping them build and sustain their own communities (Odasz, 1999).

Although Howley and Howley (1995) note that global technology is no panacea for rural areas, the Web may also be used to preserve and enhance diverse rural cultures (Odasz, 1999). For example, the Web may help improve the quality of rural schools by improving curriculum and letting students open global businesses while remaining in their own communities. If this occurs, it will be possible to face the challenge that Howley and Barker (1997) pose: determining the best way to use technology in the rural community so that it serves locally defined purposes without sacrificing the good things that rural communities and schools have to offer.

Practical Issues

Changes in rural communities during the past 20 years have triggered what appears to be an ongoing effort to enhance school-community collaboration. Obstacles remain, however. First, many rural communities have been severely damaged by forces beyond their control, such as sweeping changes in the world economy that have reduced the number of workers in agricultural and other natural-resource-based industries. Only time will tell whether rural communities can effectively use their schools to enhance their social infrastructure and quality of life. Second, there are policy issues that impede school-community collaboration, such as school funding, how to deal with state standards, and consolidation pressures (cf. Mulkey, 1989). Third, and perhaps most important, education practitioners will need to overcome what Carlson and Korth (1994) call "schoolcentric" thinking. Practitioners need to establish linkages with outside entities and to realize that what happens to the child outside the school has educational relevance. As Miller and Hahn (1997) observe, developing new forms of school-community relationships requires schools to be restructured in new and different ways that give students access to the experiences of community members in the classroom and allow the community to be used regularly as a classroom.

School leaders often perceive themselves as having a limited job description of delivering a standardized curriculum to students; they may not be receptive to innovations (Bhaerman, Grove, and Stephens, 1995). Collins and Phillips-Gary (1998) suggest that it is important to reach out to principals. (Depending on state regulations regarding school autonomy, it might also be important to reach out to superintendents.) These officials often hold considerable power in rural communities. Their support is central to bringing about change.

Wall and Luther (1988) point out legal issues for schools that are considering starting student-run businesses, such as contractual obligations between the schools, businesses, and/or other organizations; local, state, and federal regulations (for example, regulations concerning the provision of a safe environment and proper supervision for students); and insurance requirements.

Making It Happen

Today's popular notion of "thinking outside the box" offers opportunities for school reform that can build community, promote democratic discourse, and create alternative forms of employment. Many rural districts are bringing these ideas to fruition. According to Rosenfeld (1985), factors common to successful school-community programs include forceful/energetic leadership; the ability to raise needed funds; the desire to improve the community's quality of life while preserving rural characteristics; community pride in, identification with, and support of the school; an emphasis on small-scale rural features to create a distinctively nonmetropolitan program; and recognition of the economic value of the school.

In evaluating 26 of its projects, the Annenberg Rural Challenge (1997) observed a "school-community exchange" at the heart of a successful pedagogy of place. The report concluded that schools most often initiate the exchange; interactions between the community and schools are mutually beneficial; younger and older people become collective resources to communities; negative school-community histories challenge the exchange; learning to interact is an educational process; diversity can be an asset; competing cultural views need more recognition; and standards and tests need careful consideration.

Based on his years of field experience, Nelson (1995) lays out the basic principles of the Chadron State College (Nebraska) Community/School Revitalization Program that can be used to develop successful partnerships:

- Schools and communities must work together to help youth appreciate the characteristics, trends, and challenges of rural America.
- Rural economic development begins with rural community development.
- Rural community revitalization depends on visionary leaders of all ages who are empowered, united, and committed to sponsoring local initiatives and making investments.
- The school becomes the heart of each rural community when residents appreciate its central role in building a sense of community for both youth and adults.
- The curriculum can include units and projects in various subjects at various levels to help students learn about their community's history, resources, needs, and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Youth can be a powerful and enthusiastic force in promoting community revitalization when they become partners with their schools and communities in contributing their ideas, energies, and talents in planning for the future.

Jolly and Deloney (1996) offer suggestions to help school officials begin a school-community engagement process:

- Staff at rural schools, which may be relatively isolated, need firsthand opportunities to see working models of school-community partnerships so they can see how to adapt the models to their own circumstances.
- There must be staff support. Staff need to be interested in participating in the collaboration and convinced that it is relevant and compatible with the school's operations and has been field tested in similar areas.
- Information documenting the effectiveness of school-community partnerships must be widely disseminated.
- School officials like to hear success stories from other officials who have implemented school-community partnerships.
- A support network is needed when new programs are being adopted.
- There must be staff development opportunities.
- Schools need constant technical assistance to help build a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Miller (1995) notes that the long-term benefits of school-community partnerships may include leadership development, renewed civic responsibility, and a revitalized sense of community. Building these assets can mean a higher quality of life, including physical amenities, job opportunities, and a culture of lifelong education. Stern (1994) suggests that there is a need to redesign rural education to create opportunities for rural youth in their communities. She notes that school curricula linked to community development have integrated students into community life in a significant way, thus changing their attitudes about their communities. School-community partnerships have helped students see that the community is a possible place to stay or return to after college.

Conclusion

Tapping into broader community resources and networks can benefit both the community and the schools. To effectively work together, community entities—such as families, government, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and churches—must understand how their involvement can both benefit and deter school improvement. In addition, schools must understand the importance of sharing their resources with the community. When schools and communities collaborate successfully, they marshal their resources for their long-term survival.

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This section of "The ERIC Review" describes federal support for urban and rural community schools and provides resources for readers interested in learning more about urban and rural school-community partnerships. We hope that you will find these resources helpful as a starting point for further investigation.

Federal Support for Urban and Rural Community Schools

Linda Schartman

The federal government continues to support strong school-community relationships. The descriptions below contain information on relevant programs and initiatives sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other federal agencies.

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program
Web: http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc

Funded at $453 million for fiscal year 2000, the 21st CCLC Program provides funds to school-community partnerships so they can create safe havens for enhanced learning by keeping inner-city and rural public schools open after school, on weekends, and during the summer. The program helps urban and rural schools plan, implement, and expand projects that benefit the education, health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. At community learning centers, students can find homework assistance, mentoring, drug and violence prevention counseling, college preparation courses, and enrichment in the core academic subjects.

America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth
Web: http://www.americaspromise.org

Funded at $7.6 million for fiscal year 2000, America's Promise is a national initiative that works to help all children grow into healthy, strong, and productive adults. It calls for organizations and all levels of government to fulfill five promises for children, including the provision of mentors, safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours, health care, job training, and opportunities for community service. For additional information about America's Promise, see "Resource Organizations" on page 27.

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)
Web: http://www.arc.gov

Established by Congress in 1965 and funded at $6.3 million for fiscal year 2000, ARC is a partnership comprising the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a presidential appointee who represents the federal government. ARC helps people in the Appalachian region by funding projects such as education and workforce training programs and small business expansion that support social and economic development.

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Community Technology Centers
Web: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/CTC

Funded at $32.5 million for fiscal year 2000, the Community Technology Centers program provides people in low-income communities with access to computers, information technology, and learning services. The technology at these centers can be used for preschool preparation, workforce development, afterschool enrichment, and adult and continuing education.

Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Program
Web: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform

Funded at $220 million for fiscal year 2000, the CSRD program works to increase student achievement by helping public schools throughout the United States implement schoolwide reform that is based on effective practices; includes an emphasis on basic academics and parent involvement; and will help all children, especially low-achieving children, to succeed. To qualify for funding, schools must integrate curriculum and instruction, student assessment, teacher professional development, parent involvement, and school management into their reform efforts and must draw on the expertise of outside partners who are experienced in schoolwide reform. Each participating school will receive at least $50,000 per year for up to three years.

Discounted Telecommunications Services for Schools and Libraries (E-Rate)
Web: http://www.ed.gov/Technology/comm-mit.html

A billion-dollar federal grant program, E-Rate aims to end the digital divide between poor and rich schools and among urban, rural, and suburban schools by providing discounted telecommunications services to schools and libraries. For more information about E-Rate, see the *E-Rate Fact Sheet* online at the above Web address. Applications for E-Rate are available online from the Universal Service Administrative Company's Schools and Libraries Program at http://www.sl.universalservice.org.

Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) Initiative
Web: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/ezec.html

The EZ/EC Initiative is designed to revitalize distressed communities by providing them with social service block grants, tax incentives, and preference for certain types of federal funding. The initiative supports community-based partnerships comprising community residents and representatives from local and state governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations and focuses on job creation and economic opportunities in federally designated EZ/EC areas. Federal funds and tax incentives have helped these areas receive $14 billion in additional public- and private-sector investments.

Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA), Title I
Web: http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/brochure/iasa-bro.html

Funded at $8.7 billion for fiscal year 2000, IASA reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and is a major part of the U.S. Department of Education's efforts to reform education. IASA helps students meet state academic standards by providing resources to states, school districts, and schools. Title I of the IASA requires schools and parents to support student achievement by forming school-parent compacts that outline the expectations, goals, and responsibilities of both parties. The Web site contains the brochure *The Improving America's Schools Act of 1994: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.*

Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships (LAAP)
Web: http://ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/LAAP

LAAP is a $15 million federal grant program that supports partnerships among colleges and universities, employers, technology companies, and other relevant organizations to create postsecondary programs that deliver distance education "anytime and anywhere." To be eligible for grants, partnerships must consist of two or more independent agencies, organizations, or institutions and must be able to match requested federal funds one-to-one.

Neighborhood Networks
Web: http://www.hud.gov/nnw/nnwindex.html

An initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Neighborhood Networks helps make technology accessible to residents in HUD-assisted and/or HUD-insured housing. To facilitate this goal, the initiative promotes the development of resource and computer-learning centers where residents can go to further their education and expand their job skills. Although HUD provides some assistance, Neighborhood Networks relies primarily on local support—such as grants, loans, and volunteer services—for the development and maintenance of the centers.

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education (PFIE)
Web: http://pfie.ed.gov

PFIE is a partnership of more than 6,000 members of school, business, religious, and community organizations who work together to help families become more involved in their children's learning at school and at home and to strengthen schools and improve student achievement through family-school-community partnerships. PFIE successes have included student- and family-friendly policies at the workplace, before- and afterschool programs, tutoring and mentoring initiatives, and donations of facilities and technologies.

School-to-Work (STW)
Web: http://www.stw.ed.gov/index.htm

The STW program, funded through the 1994 School-to-Work Opportunities Act and jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor, helps states

and local communities develop systems that enable students to successfully transition from high school to postsecondary education or the workplace. Urban and Rural Opportunities Grants, awarded under the act, specifically help impoverished urban and rural communities develop STW systems. The legislation sunsets in 2001, when STW systems will be institutionalized at the state and local levels.

Star Schools
Web: http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/StarSchools/index.html

Totaling $50,550,000 for fiscal year 2000, Star Schools grants help urban and rural schools by supporting access to technology, telecommunications equipment, and instructional programs and by offering professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators. Star Schools instructional programs span a range of areas, including parenting skills, high school completion, adult literacy, hands-on science and mathematics courses, advanced placement courses, foreign language courses, workplace skills, and life skills. Star Schools also funds teleconferences, online discussion groups, and virtual communities so that teachers and other education personnel can communicate with colleagues around the world and participate in staff development programs.

Resource Organizations

Timothy Collins and Erwin Flaxman

American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209–1813
Phone: 703–528–0700
Fax: 703–841–1543
E-mail: Info@aasa.org
Web: http://www.aasa.org

AASA supports and promotes the development of school system leaders to make them more effective, improve the quality of public education, and help schools prepare for the 21st century. It currently helps more than 14,000 school leaders in the United States and abroad. Its Web site contains information on conferences and publications for superintendents, with specialized categories for those working at urban schools and those at rural and small schools. The site also contains information about the Rural/Small Schools Administrators Conference; information on how to join AASA; numerous links to online publications, funding resources, and other education resources; and state contact information.

American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF)
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202–775–9731
Fax: 202–775–9733
E-mail: aypf@aypf.org
Web: http://www.aypf.org

AYPF provides professional development opportunities to policymakers who work at local, state, and national levels to help them develop youth-related policies more effectively. It produces publications and hosts approximately 35 forums each year on topics such as in-school and out-of-school education; youth community service; youth school-to-work transitions; postsecondary education; teenage parents; the roles of various community stakeholders in helping young people become productive, responsible, and engaged citizens; and youth and community development in urban and rural areas. Its Web site contains information about previous forums, links to government and private organizations, and publication information.

America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth
909 North Washington Street, Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314–1556
Toll Free: 888–55–YOUTH (559–6884)
Phone: 703–684–4500
Fax: 703–535–3900
E-mail: commit@americaspromise.org
Web: http://www.americaspromise.org

Supported by the executive branch of the U.S. government, America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth is a national initiative that works to ensure that youth have the resources necessary to become successful adults. To achieve this goal, it encourages people in all parts of the community to work together and helps them create successful partnerships. It also works to fulfill the Five Promises for

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children: a good relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to go during nonschool hours, a healthy future, good job skills, and community service opportunities. Its Web site describes the Five Promises, offers many online publications, and tells how people can get involved in their communities.

Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
Phone: 410–547–6600
Fax: 410–547–6624
E-mail: webmail@aecf.org
Web: http://www.aecf.org

The Annie E. Casey Foundation helps disadvantaged and at-risk children and their families by providing grants to public and nonprofit organizations. The grants are used to improve the support services, employment opportunities, and economies of distressed communities. Its Web site contains guidelines for submitting grant proposals and the full text of many publications. It also describes the KIDS COUNT program—an effort to track the status of U.S. children—and provides the full text of related publications as well as a searchable database.

Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL) Rural Education Specialty
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325–1348
Toll Free: 800–624–9120
Phone: 304–347–0400
TDD: 304–347–0448
Fax: 304–347–0487
E-mail: aelinfo@ael.org
Web: http://www.ael.org/rel/rural/index.htm

The AEL Rural Education Specialty works to enhance the relationship between rural schools and communities. It conducts research and disseminates information with a focus on five themes: sense of place, unsettling America, pathways to adulthood, small-scale organization, and policy challenges. Its Web site includes a Rural Education Directory, which is a database of organizations, government agencies, publishers, colleges, and universities that are involved in rural education and serve a statewide, multistate, or national audience; an online newsletter about rural education; and many of AEL's publications in full text.

Center for School Change (CSC)
Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (West Bank)
301 19th Avenue South, Room 234
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: 612–626–1834
Fax: 612–625–0104
E-mail: dhare@hhh.umn.edu
Web: http://www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/school-change

Sponsored by the University of Minnesota, CSC promotes student and community success by working with educators, parents, students, policymakers, and other community members to improve students' academic achievement and attitudes, increase school graduation rates, and strengthen relationships among all community members. Its Web site contains information about CSC grants and a list of CSC publications on topics such as family involvement in schools, teacher preparation, and charter schools.

Center for the Study of Small/Rural Schools
University of Oklahoma
College of Continuing Education
Building 4, Room 213
555 East Constitution Street
Norman, OK 73072
Phone: 405–325–1450
Fax: 405–325–7075
E-mail: jcsimmons@ou.edu
Web: http://www.occe.ou.edu/cssrs.html

The Center for the Study of Small/Rural Schools helps small and rural schools increase their knowledge in areas including school reform, restructuring, and professional development. To accomplish this goal, the center offers services—such as workshops, training programs, needs assessments, and technical assistance—to school boards, school staff, businesses, community groups, rural organizations, state and federal agencies, and international organizations. Its Web site offers several full-text research reports, including *The Changing Character of Rural America* and *Long-Term Rural Superintendents: Characteristics and Attributes*.

Civic Practices Network (CPN)
Center for Human Resources
Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare
Brandeis University
60 Turner Street
Waltham, MA 02154
Phone: 617–736–4890
Fax: 617–736–4891
E-mail: cpn@tiac.net
Web: http://www.cpn.org

CPN is a nonpartisan project that promotes the development of civic skills, problem-solving abilities, and collaborative projects for all community members. It works to bring needed resources into communities by offering civic-oriented publications on many topics, including community issues, youth education and development, workplace empowerment, and more. Its Web site contains the full text of many of its publications and a searchable database of essays and case studies.

Communities in Schools, Inc. (CIS)
277 South Washington Street, Suite 210
Alexandria, VA 22314
Toll Free: 800–CIS–4KIDS (247–4543)
Phone: 703–519–8999
Fax: 703–519–7213
E-mail: cis@cisnet.org
Web: http://cisnet.org/index.html

CIS works to bring community resources into the schools and to foster strong school-community relationships so that children can succeed in school and lead productive lives. CIS programs currently assist more than 1 million youth and their families by providing them with access to services. Its Web site contains a list of CIS partners, a list of CIS programs by state, and contact information for starting a CIS program.

Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Phone: 202–606–5000
Fax: 202–565–2784
E-mail: webmaster@cns.gov
Web: http://www.cns.gov

The Corporation for National Service promotes community involvement as a means for Americans of all ages to combat illiteracy, poverty, crime, and other problems. The corporation has three major community service initiatives: AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps. Each year, AmeriCorps involves more than 40,000 people in goal-oriented community service efforts, Learn and Serve America provides funding and training to support service-learning programs, and the National Senior Service Corps helps almost 500,000 senior citizens use their time and talents to improve their communities. The corporation's Web site provides additional information and links for these three initiatives as well as state profiles on successful service programs.

Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Phone: 212–465–2044
Fax: 212–465–8637
E-mail: ebrownfield@familiesandwork.org
Web: http://www.familiesandworkinst.org

The Families and Work Institute conducts nonpartisan research and uses the results to develop strategies that support beneficial family-community-workplace relationships and to track changes in work and family life. It also provides evaluation and technical assistance in areas such as family support services, work-life needs, and male involvement in children's lives, and it produces research-based reports and other publications. Its Web site contains information about its research programs and publications; details on how to support the institute's efforts; and information and publications related to the Fatherhood Project®, which works to support fathers' involvement in their children's lives.

Foxfire Fund, Inc.
P.O. Box 541
Mountain City, GA 30562–0541
Phone: 706–746–5828
Fax: 706–746–5829
E-mail: foxfire@foxfire.org
Web: http://www.foxfire.org

Foxfire Fund helps teachers develop effective student-centered learning environments that promote student success and school-community involvement. It provides training and support programs for teachers and offers several publications, including *The Active Learner: A Foxfire Journal for Teachers.* Its Web site contains a description of its approach to teaching and learning; information on training programs for teachers; and publication information, with a special emphasis on materials for teachers.

Institute for Responsive Education (IRE)
Northeastern University
50 Nightingale Hall
Boston, MA 02115
Phone: 617–373–2595
Fax: 617–373–8924
E-mail: c.meza@nunet.neu.edu
Web: http://www.resp-ed.org

IRE supports school improvement efforts by promoting the creation of school-family-community partnerships. To achieve its mission, it conducts research; develops policies; provides technical assistance, training, and advocacy; and produces reports and other publications. IRE focuses particularly on issues of education equity and the education of children in low-income areas. Its Web site contains publication information; tips and resources for schools, families, and communities; and numerous links to education-related organizations.

Junior Achievement (JA)
National Headquarters and Service Center
One Education Way
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Phone: 719–540–8000
Fax: 719–540–6299
E-mail: jawebmaster@ja.org
Web: http://www.ja.org

JA offers programs for students in grades K–12 to promote business education and to help students understand and value the free enterprise system. It works with educators to provide in-school programs for students and calls on businesspeople and community leaders to share their experiences directly with students. JA programs currently help almost 4 million students. Its Web site contains detailed information about its programs and the results of program evaluations.

Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MS 64110–2046
Phone: 816–932–1000
Fax: 816–932–1430
E-mail: info@emkf.org
Web: http://www.emkf.org/entrepreneurship/vision.cfm

Sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership promotes self-sufficiency by encouraging students in grades K–12 and in college to participate in entrepreneurial activities. It supports dozens of programs, including the Agri-Entrepreneurship Education Program, the Boy Scouts of America, the Entrepreneur Invention Society, and the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. Its Web site provides resources and information for many programs in areas such as community building, entrepreneurship, family support, and youth development.

Lone Eagle Consulting
c/o Frank Odasz
2200 Rebich Lane
Dillon, MT 59725
Phone: 406–683–6270
E-mail: frank@lone-eagles.com
Web: http://lone-eagles.com

Lone Eagle Consulting helps individuals and communities—especially those in rural areas—become self-sufficient by identifying resources that can be easily used by many different groups of people and by promoting the use of

the Internet as a learning tool. Its Web site offers information about Internet training and workshops, tips on grant writing, and an online message board.

MegaSkills Education Center
Home and School Institute
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202–466–3633
Fax: 202–833–l400
E-mail: edstaff@megaskillshsi.org
Web: http://www.megaskillshsi.org

Sponsored by the Home and School Institute, the MegaSkills Education Center fosters children's development of MegaSkills—basic skills such as confidence, responsibility, teamwork, and problem solving that are needed to be successful in life. It trains teachers, administrators, parents, and community members to conduct MegaSkills workshops and implement MegaSkills programs. Its Web site includes information on its programs and program results.

National Association of Partners in Education
901 North Pitt Street, Suite 320
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703–836–4880
Fax: 703–836–6941
E-mail: napehq@napehq.org
Web: http://napehq.org

The National Association of Partners in Education works to increase the personal growth and academic success of all children by promoting and supporting numerous partnerships, including intergenerational, community service, and business partnerships. It provides technical assistance, professional development opportunities, and a leadership role to help others develop, improve, expand, and obtain resources for partnerships. Its Web site contains membership information, state contact information, training opportunities, and resource links.

National Center for Community Education (NCCE)
1017 Avon Street
Flint, MI 48503
Toll Free: 800–811–1105
Phone: 810–238–0463
Fax: 810–238–9211
E-mail: ncce@earthlink.net
Web: http://nccenet.org

NCCE promotes community education by providing leadership training and technical assistance to educators, parents, and other community members in the United States, Canada, and abroad. Through the training sessions, participants will be able to create a framework for community education practices, develop essential skills, and learn more about various community education models. NCCE's Web site contains detailed information about its training programs and workshops along with registration instructions.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE)
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030–2401
Phone: 703–359–8973
Fax: 703–359–0972
E-mail: ferguson@ncea.com
Web: http://www.ncpie.org

Comprising the nation's major education associations and advocacy groups, NCPIE strives to improve children's education by encouraging parents to become involved and by promoting family-school-community relationships. NCPIE presents information about a broad range of publications, training, and other services to promote community involvement, family education and family support, and family-school partnerships. Its Web site contains information on developing family-school partnerships, contact information for NCPIE organizations, and an online publications catalog.

National Community Education Association (NCEA)
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703–359–8973
Fax: 703–359–0972
E-mail: ncea@ncea.com
Web: http://ncea.com

NCEA is a membership organization that promotes community education by encouraging parents and other community members to become involved in public education and to form partnerships to ensure that community needs are being met. It offers leadership training, publications, networking opportunities, and referral services for its members, who include local community education directors, school superintendents, state and local school board members, and state legislators. Its Web site contains a membership application, conference information, descriptions of publications, and links to related Web sites.

National Network of Partnership Schools
Johns Hopkins University
Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships
3003 North Charles Street, Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: 410–516–8800
Fax: 410–516–8890
E-mail: nnps@csos.jhu.edu
Web: http://scov.csos.jhu.edu/p2000

The National Network of Partnership Schools is a membership organization that encourages schools, school districts, and states to develop and implement family-school-community partnerships with the goal of increasing student success. Members receive a handbook on how to create and maintain successful partnerships, information on training workshops, research and evaluation opportunities, and more. The network's Web site contains information on joining the network, descriptions of products and publications, an online bulletin board where members can post and read messages, and links to partnership-related groups and organizations.

National Rural Education Association (NREA)
Colorado State University
c/o Dr. Joseph Newlin
246 Education Building
Fort Collins, CO 80523–1588
Phone: 970–491–7022
Fax: 970–491–1317
E-mail: jnewlin@lamar.colostate.edu
Web: http://nrea.colostate.edu

Established in 1907 as the Department of Rural Education, NREA is known as the oldest unified voice for rural education in the United States. NREA is a membership organization that works to

improve educational opportunities for all children in rural areas and that serves as a national advocate for the country's rural schools, programs, and communities. It coordinates national rural education programs and activities, leads conventions and workshops related to rural education, provides a forum so that public education professionals in rural areas can share ideas, and encourages the collection and dissemination of rural education information. Members receive a wealth of benefits, including subscriptions to a journal (*The Rural Educator*) and a newsletter (*The NREA News*), convention information, and the opportunity to participate in review panels and to serve on NREA committees. NREA's Web site contains a membership application form, a detailed list of member benefits, and links to related organizations.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) Rural Education Program
101 Southwest Main, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
Toll Free: 800–547–6339
Phone: 503–275–9500
Fax: 503–275–0654
E-mail: ruraled@nwrel.org
Web: http://www.nwrel.org/ruraled

The NWREL Rural Education Program helps small, rural schools and communities meet eight NWREL goals—such as obtaining community support for schools, helping students achieve, and improving education as a profession—with a focus on education quality, equity, and access. The program enables educators to be more informed about issues that concern small, rural schools and communities by providing them with research data and technical assistance. Its Web site contains the full text of many rural education publications; links to rural education resources and organizations; and information about its Rural Teachers in Residence Program, which offers professional development opportunities for rural educators.

Organizations Concerned About Rural Education (OCRE)
1201 16th Street, NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202–822–7638
Fax: 202–822–7309
E-mail: conrad@chesapeake.net
Web: http://www.ruralschools.org

OCRE comprises more than 24 national organizations—including education, farm, rural, technology, and utility organizations—that are working to help rural communities modernize and improve their schools. OCRE hosts school modernization workshops for rural and small town educators and community leaders, and it produced a toolkit and video that can be used to conduct a one-day workshop on school rebuilding and community support. Its Web site contains the full text of the toolkit, ordering information for the video, and links to information about rural education.

Orion Society
195 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
Phone: 413–528–4422
Fax: 413–528–0676
E-mail: orion@orionsociety.org
Web: http://www.orionsociety.org

The Orion Society is a membership organization that supports community and grassroots environmental organizations across North America to promote the development of nature-literate community members. It offers national conferences, teacher training programs, and reading tours and publishes many award-winning publications. Its Web site provides conference descriptions, publication information, links to online resources, and an online membership application form.

PACERS Small Schools Cooperative
University of Alabama
Program for Rural Services and Research
205 University Boulevard East
Box 870372
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487–0372
Phone: 205–348–6432
Fax: 205–348–2412
Web: http://www.pacers.org

The PACERS Small Schools Cooperative is composed of school staff members, students, and community members from 29 small, rural public schools located throughout Alabama. Through a project called Better Schools Building Better Communities, the cooperative seeks to make learning more active and place-based, and to improve communities and schools simultaneously. The cooperative has produced a number of publications and videos, such as S*mall Schools: Education for Life*. More information about the cooperative's projects, products, and initiatives is available on its Web site.

Public Education Network
601 13th Street, NW, Suite 900 North
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202–628–7460
Fax: 202–628–1893
E-mail: pen@publiceducation.org
Web: http://www.publiceducation.org

The Public Education Network works to ensure that all children have access to high-quality public education. It provides information and technical assistance to encourage the development of school-family-community partnerships and to help community members get involved with public school reform efforts. It also supports the efforts of local education funds (LEFs), which are community-based organizations focusing on increasing student achievement and improving and reforming the overall school system. Its Web site contains information about LEFs, including a searchable directory of LEFs and instructions on creating an LEF; links and resources related to various topics, including community engagement, education equity, standards, and teacher quality; and the full text of many publications.

Rural Entrepreneurship Through Action Learning (REAL) Enterprises
115 Market Street, Suite 320
Durham, NC 27701
Toll Free: 800–798–0643
Phone: 919–688–7325
Fax: 919–682–7621
E-mail: info@realenterprises.org
Web: http://www.realenterprises.org

REAL Enterprises promotes hands-on entrepreneurship education to help children and adults become self-sufficient individuals who can participate in the

development of their communities. Initially created to help rural high schools contribute to their local economy, REAL Enterprises now serves people of all ages in all types of communities and provides curriculum guides, professional development courses, educator workshops, and more. Its Web site contains information about its services and products as well as numerous links of interest to educators.

Rural School and Community Trust
808 17th Street, NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202–955–7177
Fax: 202–955–7179
E-mail: info@ruraledu.org
Web: http://www.ruraledu.org

The Rural School and Community Trust (formerly the Annenberg Rural Challenge) works to increase student achievement and improve community life by fostering strong rural school-community relationships and encouraging students to become involved in community-based public work efforts. The trust offers advocacy; outreach; research; and publications, including *Why Rural Matters: The Need for Every State To Take Action on Rural Education,* which discusses rural education in each state. It currently serves more than 700 rural schools in 33 states. Its Web site contains the full text of many publications, selections from *Why Rural Matters,* and links to many organizations and resources.

School Development Program
55 College Street
New Haven, CT 06510
Phone: 203–737–1020
Fax: 203–737–1023
E-mail: beverly.crowther@yale.edu
Web: http://info.med.yale.edu/comer

The School Development Program seeks to involve teachers, administrators, parents, and all other adult community members in all aspects of children's development. It developed a nine-part process designed to promote effective school-family relationships. Its Web site contains a description of the process; information on professional development events for principals and other educators in leadership positions; and the full text of many of its reports and publications.

Science and Math Initiatives (SAMI) and the Teacher Help Service
Annenberg/CPB
401 Ninth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202–879–9600
Fax: 202–879–9696
E-mail: info@learner.org
Web: http://sami.lanl.gov

Funded by Annenberg/CPB, SAMI is a searchable database that was designed especially for rural math and science teachers and lists math, science, curriculum, and funding resources. The SAMI Web site contains the database and information about the Teacher Help Service, a free service that enables teachers to get online assistance from mentors on finding Internet resources, planning projects, and so forth.

Search Institute
700 South Third Street, Suite 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Toll Free: 800–888–7828
Phone: 612–376–8955
Fax: 612–376–8956
E-mail: si@search-institute.org
Web: http://www.search-institute.org

The Search Institute works to promote the development of healthy and responsible children and adolescents. To accomplish this goal, it conducts research, produces research-based publications, and offers training and technical assistance to organizations and individuals. It also supports Healthy Communities–Healthy Youth, a national initiative that encourages community members to work together to nurture young people. Its Web site includes a discussion of 40 youth development assets, research and survey information, and an online catalog of publications.

ERIC Resources

Linda Schartman

ERIC is a national information system designed to provide users with ready access to an extensive body of education-related literature. Established in 1966, it is supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement and the National Library of Education. For more information about ERIC, contact ACCESS ERIC—the reference and referral component of the ERIC system—at 1–800–LET–ERIC or visit ACCESS ERIC's Web site at http://www.accesseric.org. Several components of the ERIC system provide resources concerning urban and rural school-community partnerships; these are listed below.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Main Hall, Room 303, Box 40
New York, NY 10027–6696
Toll Free: 800–601–4868
Phone: 212–678–3433
E-mail: eric-cue@columbia.edu
Web: http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

This ERIC Clearinghouse offers a wealth of information on urban and minority education, including articles, manuals, annotated bibliographies, and reviews and summaries of existing materials. Its major subject areas include community involvement; equity and cultural diversity; urban and minority families, student services, and youth development; and urban teachers. Its Web site offers Pathways, which are collections of online resources on assorted topics; descriptions of publications; publication ordering information; and the full text of many of its publications, including *Internet Access and Content for Urban Schools and Communities; Trends and Issues in Urban Education, 1998;* and *After-School Programs for Urban Youth.*

ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL), Inc.
1031 Quarrier Street
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325–1348
Toll Free: 800–624–9120
Phone: 304–347–0400
TTY/TDD: 304–347–0448
E-mail: ericrc@ael.org
Web: http://www.ael.org/eric

This ERIC Clearinghouse provides information on various topics, including the education of American Indians, Alaska Natives, Mexican Americans, and migrants; outdoor education; rural education; and small schools. It obtains, reviews, and abstracts materials for inclusion in the ERIC database; produces and disseminates free and low-cost publications; and conducts workshops. Its Web site contains conference information as well as the full text of many of its ERIC Digests and other publications; online Digest titles include *Parent and Community Involvement in Rural Schools, The Role of the Rural Community College in Rural Community Development,* and *Sociodemographic Changes: Promises and Problems for Rural Education.*

Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Entrepreneurship Education
Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110–2046
Toll Free: 888–4–CELCEE (423–5233)
Phone: 310–206–9549
E-mail: celcee@ucla.edu
Web: http://www.celcee.edu

This Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse acquires, abstracts, and disseminates information on entrepreneurship education obtained from various sources, including journals, Web sites, syllabi, conferences, curriculum guides, publications, videos, and computer software. This information

(continued on page 34)

ERIC Resources (continued)

is geared toward all levels of education. The clearinghouse produces many ERIC Digests, which are available in full text online; titles include *Urban Revitalization and Entrepreneurial Strategies* and *Merging Economic and Environmental Concerns Through Ecopreneurship.* In addition, it produces numerous other publications such as *Empowerment Zones in Appalachia* and provides online descriptions and ordering information for them. Its Web site also contains a searchable database and links related to entrepreneurship education.

National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (Affiliate ERIC Clearinghouse)
National Institute of Building Sciences
1090 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005–4905
Toll Free: 888–552–0624
Phone: 202–289–7800
E-mail: ncef@nibs.org
Web: http://www.edfacilities.org

This Affiliate ERIC Clearinghouse provides information geared toward people who are involved in the planning, building, operation, and maintenance of K–12 schools. It offers many online resources, including Hot Topics—annotated bibliographies that contain descriptions of and links to full-text publications, books, and journal articles. Topics of interest include "Community Use of Schools" and "Preserving Historic Schools." The clearinghouse's Web site also contains the full text of many additional clearinghouse publications and links to related Web sites.

National Parent Information Network (NPIN)
Toll Free: 800–583–4135
Phone: 217–333–1386
TTY/TDD: 800–583–4135
E-mail: npin@uiuc.edu
Web: http://npin.org

A special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, NPIN offers parents access to information on research-based parenting and family involvement in education. Its Web site offers a collection of materials and services for parents and parent educators, including *Parent News,* a bimonthly online magazine; PARENTING-L, an online discussion group; and Parents AskERIC, a question-answering service that responds to e-mail inquiries on parenting, education, and child development issues. The site also contains a virtual library with descriptions of books, newsletters, and magazines; full-text resources; and a collection of full-text resources for urban and minority families, with titles such as *Partnering With Parents To Foster Learning at Home, Hand in Hand: How Nine Urban Schools Work With Families and Community Services,* and *New Beginnings: A Guide to Designing Parenting Programs for Refugee and Immigrant Parents.* Ordering information for publications is also included.

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
University of Minnesota
R-460 VoTech Building
1954 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Toll Free: 800–808–SERVe (7378)
Phone: 612–625–6276
E-mail: serve@tc.umn.edu
Web: http://umn.edu/~serve

An Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse, the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse is a repository of service-learning resources and information. It focuses on service learning from kindergarten through postsecondary education, including school- and community-based initiatives. Its Web site contains a variety of resources, including an electronic listserv; an online newsletter titled *The Update;* and searchable databases with information on workshops, publications, and programs. The site also contains descriptions and ordering information for many print-only publications; titles include *Expanding Boundaries: Building Civic Responsibility Within Higher Education; Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning;* and *Service-Learning and the Power of Participation: Schools, Communities, and Learning.*

Linda Schartman is a writer/editor at ACCESS ERIC in Rockville, Maryland.

Publications and Web Sites

Timothy Collins and Erwin Flaxman

This article describes print and online resources that offer information about urban and rural schools, community involvement, family-school partnerships, and more. Most of the publications are available in full text online but can also be ordered in print; ordering information is provided where appropriate. In addition, publications with a ◂▭▸ can be viewed online or ordered free of charge from ED Pubs, the U.S. Department of Education's Publications Center. Call ED Pubs toll free at 1–877–4ED–Pubs for the availability of these publications.

Publications

After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, 24 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/afterschool

This booklet discusses the importance of safe and enriching afterschool learning opportunities for children and youth, explains what works in afterschool programs, highlights communities with strong afterschool programs, and provides a list of related resources. ◂▭▸

American Youth Policy Forum Compendia. American Youth Policy Forum.
Web: http://www.aypf.org/compendium/index.html

Produced by the American Youth Policy Forum, this work consists of two volumes, each containing almost 50 summaries of youth program and practice evaluations as well as a comprehensive bibliography with the full citations of the studies. The volumes are titled *SOME Things DO Make a Difference for Youth* (1997) and *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth* (1999). $10 for each volume, $17.50 for both volumes. American Youth Policy Forum, Department 301, 1836 Jefferson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20036–2505; 202–775–9731.

Beyond the Bell: A Toolkit for Creating Effective After-School Programs. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2000, 110 pp.
Web: http://www.ncrel.org/after/bellkit.htm

This publication provides practical strategies for planning and implementing afterschool programs. The strategies can also be used for before-school, summer, and extended-day programs. Educators can use this toolkit to make informed decisions about important issues such as management, collaboration, programming, evaluation, and communication. Free. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1900 Spring Road, Suite 300, Oak Brook, IL 60523–1480; 800–356–2735.

Bringing Education to After-School Programs. U.S. Department of Education, 1999, 34 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/After_School_Programs

This booklet offers ideas to help schools use their afterschool programs more effectively to promote student achievement and meet student and community needs. It discusses the integration of various topics into afterschool programs, including reading, mathematics, college preparation, teacher training, technology, and parent involvement. It also provides suggestions for using afterschool programs to keep children safe and drug free. The print version of this publication is titled *Bringing Education Into the Afterschool Hours.* ◂▭▸

Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets. J. P. Kretzman and J. L. McKnight, 1993, 376 pp.

This guide to community development reviews successful community-building initiatives in hundreds of neighborhoods across the United States. It applies lessons learned from these initiatives to offer guidelines to other communities on how they can develop and capitalize on their assets. $20. ACTA Publications, 4848 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640; 800–397–2282.

Building School-Family Partnerships for Learning: Workshops for Urban Educators. O. C. Moles and D. D'Angelo, eds., 1993, 379 pp.

This publication provides information and strategies to help urban educators work with parents of elementary school students. It contains five workshops that discuss building school-family partnerships to promote learning, focusing on topics such as families, communications skills and strategies, home-learning activities, school programs and practices, and school districts. Included with each workshop is a leader's guide, transparency masters, and a set of reproducible handouts. An appendix provides information on parent involvement strategies and federal government programs, annotated lists of publications

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and resource organizations, and an evaluation form for participants. $71.36. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 364 651. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, DynEDRS, Inc., 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, VA 22153–2852; 800–443–ERIC.

The Busy Citizen's Discussion Guide: Education in Our Communities. Topsfield Foundation, Inc.; 1995; 32 pp.
Web: http://www.cpn.org/SCRC/ed_com_short.html

This publication encourages teachers, administrators, parents, students, and other community members to hold discussions on education issues, which can lead to new ideas for school and community improvement. It provides tips for holding effective discussions, questions that can be used to promote discussion, and different viewpoints that should be considered. $1. Study Circles Resource Center, 697 Pomfret Street, P.O. Box 203, Pomfret, CT 06258; 860–928–2616.

A Call to Commitment: Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000, 32 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/calltocommit

This publication promotes and celebrates fathers' increased participation in children's learning, shows how this participation contributes to children's education success, and describes research on the benefits of family involvement. It also contains strategies for improving and extending fathers' involvement in their children's education and provides examples of programs that involve fathers in children's learning. A list of organizational and Internet resources and a Partnership for Family Involvement in Education factsheet are included.

Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods To Rebuild America. L. B. Schorr, 1997, 400 pp.

This book describes successful efforts to reduce school failure, child abuse, youth violence, teen parenting, and persistent poverty. The author presents stories of community builders, who are transforming whole neighborhoods; early childhood educators, who are helping families ensure their children's readiness to learn; principals and teachers, who are building learning communities in which all children can learn at high levels; child protection professionals, who are partnering with neighborhood churches; and community leaders, who are converting schools and housing projects from fortresses to valued community centers. Contact an online bookseller or your local bookstore for price and availability.

Community Schools: Serving Children, Families, and Communities. L. E. Decker and M. R. Boo, 1998, 30 pp.

Written for policymakers, community leaders, and advisory groups, this brochure describes community education as a process for improving schools and building effective communities. $2.95. National Community Education Association, 3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A, Fairfax, VA 22030; 703–359–8973.

A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for Family-School-Community Partnerships. U.S. Department of Education, 1997, 66 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Compact

This handbook provides strategies, examples, checklists, and activity sheets to help parents, educators, and community members create effective, workable *compacts*—written plans detailing how families, schools, and communities will work together to improve student learning.

The Corporate Imperative: A Business Guide for Implementing Strategic Education Partnerships. U.S. Department of Education, 1999, 84 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/strategicpartner

This guide can help businesses assess their business-education partnerships and determine whether the partnerships address key business and school objectives. It focuses on evaluating education approaches and the outcomes of programs, practices, and policies designed to meet business and school concerns. It is designed for use by human resource staff, community relations practitioners, administrators, education managers, and training and organizational development staff.

Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice. S. M. Swap, 1993, 227 pp.

This book reviews research, policy, and practice in the field of school and family partnerships and offers ideas to help educators develop successful partnerships. Emphasis is placed on two-way communication, parent-teacher conferences, and how schools and families mutually support one another. Appendices contain a school profile, family information form, parent surveys, suggested resources, and a transcript of a listening situation. $17.95. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, P.O. Box 20, Williston, VT 05495–0020; 800–575–6566.

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools. K. Dwyer, D. Osher, and C. Warger; 1998; 32 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html

This guide presents research-based practices that can help school communities identify and respond to early warning signs of violence. It describes the characteristics of safe, responsive schools; early warning signs of violence; interventions; and prevention and response plans.

Engaging Families and Communities: Pathways to Educational Success. L. E. Decker and others, 2000, 123 pp.

This book can assist educators with developing family-school-community involvement programs that help children succeed and be productive. It explains how to adapt current ideas into programs that will fit the community's specific needs. $23.95. National Community Education Association, 3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A, Fairfax, VA 22030; 703–359–8973.

Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches. An Idea Book. J. E. Funkhouser, M. R. Gonzales, and O. C. Moles, 1997, 162 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FamInvolve

This idea book provides strategies to help schools, families, and communities develop and implement successful school-family partnerships. The strategies were used by 20 Title I programs and include finding the necessary time and resources, restructuring schools so that parents can be more involved, and getting outside support to help the partnerships succeed. The book also presents conclusions about creating and sustaining school-family partnerships. Appendices contain profiles of 10 successful partnerships, contact information for these partnerships, tables describing 20 successful family involvement programs, and resources for more information. $17. U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250–7954; 202–512–1800.

Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools. C. W. Nord, D. Brimhall, and J. West; 1997, 223 pp.
Web: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/fathers

This report examines the involvement of resident (excluding foster) and nonresident fathers in their children's schools and how this involvement affects the children's success in school. It includes information on school involvement obtained from the parents of 16,910 children in grades K–12 as part of the 1996 National Household Education Survey.

Fathers Matter! Involving Fathers in Children's Learning: A Kit for Educators and Other Professionals. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000.
Web: http://oeri4.ed.gov/pubs/parents/fathers

This kit is designed to help educators and other professionals increase fathers' involvement in children's learning and family involvement in education. It contains overheads with corresponding speaker notes; lists of references and resources; a video and corresponding discussion guide; and a publication that discusses current research, strategies, and model programs. [Note: The video is not available online but can be ordered from ED Pubs.]

Finding Their Own Place: Youth in Three Small Rural Communities Take Part in Instructive School-to-Work Experiences. B. A. Miller and K. J. Hahn, 1997, 114 pp.

This book documents community-based education practices that can help rural communities survive difficult times. It provides case studies of three schools—in Broadus, Montana; Saco, Montana; and Methow Valley, Washington—that worked to engage youth in experiences that benefited their communities and to help youth become productive members of a democratic society. This book also addresses how other schools and communities can apply the lessons learned in the case studies and reviews research on school-to-work issues and programs. Appendices use the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills report as a framework for the job skills and competencies addressed in each case study and include sample community development goals, sample evaluation forms, and an annotated bibliography of resources. $12. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, AEL, Inc., P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325–1348; 800–624–9120.

Full-Service Schools: A Revolution in Health and Social Services for Children, Youth, and Families. J. G. Dryfoos, 1994, 336 pp.

This book describes the movement to integrate support services into schools as a way to respond to social problems in the community. The author provides examples of school-based programs in Baltimore, Denver, New York, Pittsburgh, and other urban areas and offers suggestions for increasing support service activities. The book includes an appendix that reviews the programs of 12 schools that support full-service activities. Contact an online bookseller or your local bookstore for price and availability.

Getting America's Students Ready for the 21st Century: Meeting the Technology Literacy Challenge: A Report to the Nation on Technology and Education. L. G. Roberts, 1996, 72 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/Technology/Plan/NatTechPlan

This report reviews President Clinton's Technology Literacy Challenge, which calls for all students to be technologically literate by the early 21st century. It presents a framework that states and local communities can use to develop local plans of action that support the use of technology in achieving high standards of teaching and learning. The challenge was developed in response to the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994.

Ideas That Work. Appalachian Regional Commission, 1999, 60 pp.
Web: http://www.arc.gov/infopubs/ideas/ideasix.htm

This publication describes the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC's) 35-year effort to help Appalachian residents develop their capital and their human resources. It details the five goals of ARC and shows how community groups have made progress toward these goals. It includes an index of projects by state, with a description and contact information for each project. Available online only.

Investing in Partnerships for Student Success: A Basic Tool for Community Stakeholders To Guide Educational Partnership Development and Management. U.S. Department of Education, 1999, 70 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/investpartner

This guide helps community stakeholders—including educators, families, businesses, and government organizations—develop and implement partnerships and evaluate their efforts. It presents step-by-step instructions, questions that should be considered, and blank tables that can be used to keep track of information and progress. It also addresses challenges that can affect whether goals and objectives are met.

Just Beyond the Classroom: Community Adventures for Interdisciplinary Learning. C. E. Knapp, 1996, 108 pp.

This book aims to create a bridge between current school reform efforts and the field of *outdoor education*, which is a general term describing the use of resources outside the classroom for educational purposes. It presents a dozen outdoor adventures—each of which contains an organizing problem, background information, activities, reflection questions, and performance assessments—for students in grades 4–9. Appendices contain brief histories of outdoor education and experiential learning, an environmental inventory, bibliographies of related materials, guidelines for creating student-centered learning communities, a list of relevant organizations, and 15 ways to study a place without a guide. $12. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, AEL, Inc., P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325–1348; 800–624–9120.

Keeping Schools Open As Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School. U.S. Department of Education, 1997, 62 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters

This handbook contains information on how to turn schools into community learning centers by keeping them open before and after regular hours and during the summer. It provides specific suggestions for estimating costs, developing a budget, and designing an effective program and lists resources for more information.

Local Schools of Thought: A Search for Purpose in Rural Education. C. D. Webb, L. K. Shumway, and R. W. Shute, 1996, 77 pp.

This book examines the concept of *thoughtful education* in the context of school reform. Thoughtful education transcends the mere transfer of information, focusing instead on helping students create meaning from information and thereby develop their minds. Students engage in thoughtful learning by weighing evidence, connecting ideas, understanding perspective, finding alternatives, and judging value. This book demonstrates how individual teachers and administrators can practice thoughtful education and describes the implications for schools. It includes an appendix with an annotated bibliography of additional resources. $12. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, AEL, Inc., P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325–1348; 800–624–9120.

New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement. A. M. Shartrand and others, 1997, 76 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NewSkills

This publication offers guidelines to promote and improve teacher preparation in the area of family involvement. It discusses the status of teacher preparation in family involvement, related skills and attitudes, and promising methods.

The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education: Who We Are and What We Do. U.S. Department of Education, 2000, 24 pp.
Web: http://pfie.ed.gov

This booklet describes the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education (PFIE); its benefits; and its goals, including helping families become more involved in their children's education and promoting children's achievement. It also provides descriptions of specific efforts to accomplish these goals and a partner registration form. [Note: To read the text online, go to the Web site and click on "Publications" and then on "Archives."]

Place Value: An Educator's Guide to Good Literature on Rural Lifeways, Environments, and Purposes of Education. T. Haas and P. Nachtigal, 1998, 72 pp.

This book contains five bibliographical essays that review literature on what it means to live well. It suggests that quality of life depends on the connections that people have with one another and their surroundings rather than on material wealth. It challenges teachers to re-examine the purposes of education and to equip students with the tools they need to make conscious choices about living well in their own communities. An annotated bibliography of the 42 works cited in the essays contains commentary and an abstract for each work. $12. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, AEL, Inc., P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325–1348; 800–624–9120.

Questions Parents Ask About Schools. U.S. Department of Education, 1998, 15 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/Questions

This publication lists questions that parents commonly ask about starting school, schoolwork, homework, career preparation, safety, and family expectations and offers some answers to these questions. Information about the types of questions parents ask was obtained through surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago and the National Center for Education Statistics.

Renewing Urban Schools: The Community Connection: Youth at Risk. R. Wilensky and D. M. Kline, 1988, 54 pp.

This book describes the vital connection between community revitalization and effective urban education reform. Urban renewal depends on a strong education system that prepares all children for the job market. Well-educated, productive citizens strengthen the community by serving as positive role models for the next generation. Revitalizing urban communities also depends on national policies that adequately address housing, health, income, child care, and economic development. This book shows educators and policymakers how to create strong school-community relationships. An appendix contains a list of programs that link schools and communities. $13.38. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 309 218. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, DynEDRS, Inc., 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, VA 22153–2852; 800–443–ERIC.

The Rural Educator: Journal for Rural and Small Schools, Special Issue. Volume 21, Number 2, Winter 1999–2000.

In this special issue of the National Rural Education Association's (NREA's) official journal, educators from across the United States discuss how their schools have implemented place-based curricula. The seven articles represent two perspectives: the National Science Foundation Rural Systemic Initiative and the Annenberg Rural Challenge (now the Rural School and Community Trust). Free to NREA members. National Rural Education Association, Colorado State University, c/o Dr. Joseph Newlin, 246 Education Building, Fort Collins, CO 80523–1588; 970–491–7022.

School and Family Partnerships [Report no. 6]. J. L. Epstein, March 1992, 32 pp.

This report discusses the attempts made during a 10-year period to increase parent involvement in schools. It summarizes research that highlights the influence of family and school environments on family involvement in schools as well as the influence of school-family partnerships on parents, students, and teachers. It also addresses the need for educating and training teachers and administrators to work with families. $3. Publications Department, Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University, 3003 North Charles Street, Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21218; 410–516–8808.

Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning. U.S. Department of Education, 1994, 50 pp.
Web: http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/families/strong

This publication discusses the importance of family involvement in children's learning through a review of research findings from the past 30 years. It discusses family involvement, school-family partnerships, community and business involvement, and state and federal programs.

Urgent Message: Families Crucial to School Reform. A. C. Lewis and A. T. Henderson, 1997, 120 pp.

In this report, the authors contend that the school reform movement has insignificantly changed what and how students learn because it lacks a foundation of informed and active parents and other members of the school community. Using case studies, the authors examine various reform strategies and present ways to include parents in reform. Appendices include research and reference material and a table of parent involvement provisions. $14.95. Center for Law and Education, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20009; 202–986–3000.

Using Technology To Strengthen Employee and Family Involvement in Education. S. D. Otterbourg, 1998, 42 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/TechStrength

This publication examines the challenges and benefits of using technology to strengthen employee and family involvement in education. It focuses on access and equity, technology literacy, demonstrated results, and investment costs. It also includes survey results from 12 companies and organizations as well as examples of corporate programs.

Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, 87 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/SafeSmart

This resource guide contains recent research, resources, and information on promising afterschool programs. It is designed to help superintendents, principals, parent leaders, communities, employers, local governments, and others begin or expand afterschool programs. It discusses afterschool programs and activities, including key components, effective practices, and how communities are meeting local needs.

Worlds Apart: Why Poverty Persists in Rural America. C. M. Duncan, 1999, 235 pp.

This book examines the nature of persistent poverty by comparing two impoverished towns—one in Appalachia, the other in the Mississippi Delta—with a prosperous rural mill town in northern New England. Drawing on more than 350 indepth interviews with people of all social classes and U.S. Census Bureau data, the book examines the way that class structure and politics in these communities shape their civic culture and thus their opportunities for change. Contact an online bookseller or your local bookstore for price and availability.

Yes, You Can: A Guide for Establishing Mentoring Programs To Prepare Youth for College. U.S. Department of Education, 1998, 60 pp.
Web: http://www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/yyc.pdf

This guide offers valuable information about mentoring programs, including what they are and how to develop and implement them. It also offers profiles

of successful programs and contact information for these programs and other organizations. It is geared toward employers, community-based organizations, and others interested in establishing mentoring programs to help youth prepare for college.

Youth Today: The Newspaper on Youth Work

This independent newspaper is geared toward people in the child and youth services field. It currently has more than 70,000 subscribers across the United States. It discusses topics such as youth development; juvenile justice; gang and violence prevention; adolescent health; teen pregnancy, sex, and parenting; afterschool programs and mentoring; job training and school-to-work programs; and best practices. $14.97 for 10 issues. Youth Today, 1200 17th Street, NW, Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20036; 800–599–2455.

Web Sites

Curriculum of Place
Web: http://learn.sdstate.edu/prscr/CurriculumofPlace/placehome.html

Sponsored by South Dakota State University and the Program for Rural School and Community Renewal, this Web site defines *curriculum of place* and provides related information, including a reading list, links to Web sites for teachers and students, and links to other helpful sites.

LEARNWEB
Web: http://learnweb.harvard.edu

This Web site offers access to two online Harvard Graduate School of Education resources: Education With New Technologies (ENT) and Active Learning Practices for Schools (ALPS). ENT is an online community designed to help educators incorporate technology into their curriculum. It provides opportunities for educators to exchange information with one another, examples of how new technologies are being used in education, extensive online resources, and much more. ALPS is an online community that encourages teachers and administrators worldwide to collaborate online with staff at Harvard's Graduate School of Education with the goal of improving education practices. It provides a curriculum design tool, an online chat room, ideas for professional development, and additional resources and information.

My History Is America's History
Web: http://www.myhistory.org

Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, this Web site is intended to help all Americans learn more about their families, their communities, and their nation by encouraging them to share their family history. It includes suggestions for educators on how to incorporate family history into the classroom and links to related resources and Web sites.

Pulling Together: R&D Resources for Rural Schools
Web: http://www.ncrel.org/rural

Produced by the National Network of Regional Educational Laboratories, this Web site provides a portfolio of resources to help educators in rural areas ensure that children receive a high-quality education. The resources are grouped into six main categories: curriculum, school-community partnerships, school effectiveness, technology, finance and governance, and human resources. Each category contains numerous links to related publications, Web sites, services, and training programs. This Web site also contains the full text of *Pulling Together: The Rural Circumstance*, a research-based document that examines education in rural areas and focuses on topics such as education research and development as well as changes in rural areas and schools.

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Network
Web: http://www.relnetwork.org

This Web site provides information about and links to the Regional Educational Laboratories, which are education research and development organizations supported by contracts with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Of particular interest are the Laboratory for Student Success, which focuses on urban education; the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, which focuses on rural education; and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, which specializes in education technology. The Web site also features a database of REL publications, dozens of which are related to community involvement in education and school reform.

School Design
Web: http://www.ed.gov/inits/construction/ctty-centers.html

This page from the U.S. Department of Education Web site provides links to other Web sites and publications that explore how parents, teachers, and other community members can help ensure that new and renovated schools meet the community's needs by participating in the planning and design of these schools.

Schools of Promise
Web: http://www.schoolsofpromise.org

Schools of Promise is a collaborative effort of the American Association of School Administrators, Communities in Schools, and America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth. It calls for the development of community-school partnerships to give youth access to the resources they need to be successful. The Web site contains general information; instructions on how to develop a local School of Promise; and a list of current Schools of Promise, organized by state and school district.

Searching the ERIC Database on Urban and Rural Community Schools

Linda Schartman

The ERIC database is the world's largest education database and an excellent resource for anyone seeking information on urban and rural community schools and related topics. ERIC maintains abstracts of more than 1 million research reports, curriculum and teaching guides, conference papers, and journal articles dating from 1966 to the present. You can search the ERIC database for free—either online through the ERIC systemwide Web site at http://www.accesseric.org or through print indexes and CD-ROMs at hundreds of libraries, college and university campuses, and state and local education offices.

When you perform a search on a specific topic, you will receive an annotated bibliography of related journal and document literature. You can then select the titles of interest and read the accompanying abstracts. To get the full text of a journal article (shown as EJ followed by six digits), visit a university library or a large public library or contact a journal article reprint service, such as The UnCover Company (1–800–787–7979; http://uncweb.carl.org) or the Institute for Scientific Information (1–800–336–4474; http://www.isinet.com).

To get the full text of a document (shown as ED followed by six digits), visit one of the more than 1,000 libraries around the world that maintain an ERIC microfiche collection. To find the library nearest you, call ACCESS ERIC at 1–800–LET–ERIC. You can also order a print copy of many documents from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) at 1–800–443–ERIC. In addition, many documents published after 1992 can be ordered and delivered from EDRS via the Internet at http://www.edrs.com.

Each entry in the ERIC database has been indexed with *descriptors* and *identifiers*—special ERIC terms that describe the most important concepts contained in a journal article or document. Although you can search the database using regular words and phrases, your search will be far more effective if you use ERIC descriptors and identifiers.

When searching the database for information on urban and rural community schools and related topics, begin with the following descriptors:

- *Community Schools*
- *Integrated Services*
- *Partnerships in Education*
- *Rural Education*
- *School Community Relationship*
- *Service Learning*
- *Urban Education*
- *Urban Schools*

Other related descriptors include the following:

- *Access to Education*
- *Community Development*
- *Community Education*
- *Community Involvement*
- *Educational Change*
- *Experiential Learning*
- *Family School Relationship*
- *Geographic Isolation*
- *Nontraditional Education*
- *Outreach Programs*
- *Parent Participation*
- *Rural to Urban Migration*
- *Teacher Role*

You can also search the database by using the following identifier:

- *Place Based Education*

If you require assistance in searching the ERIC database for information on urban and rural community schools and related topics, call the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education at 1–800–601–4868 or the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools at 1–800–624–9120. If you search extensively on a regular basis, you may find the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* helpful. To access the *Thesaurus* online, go to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation's Web site at http://ericae.net/scripts/ewiz. You can use the site's Search ERIC Wizard to select appropriate terms, which can then be used to search the ERIC database at http://www.accesseric.org. Paper copies of the *Thesaurus* are available from Oryx Press (1–800–279–6799; http://www.oryxpress.com) and at most places that offer access to the ERIC database. For general information about accessing the database or for a free copy of the publication *All About ERIC,* call ACCESS ERIC at 1–800–LET–ERIC.

Linda Schartman is a writer/editor at ACCESS ERIC in Rockville, Maryland.

Putting It All Together: An Action Plan

Timothy Collins and Erwin Flaxman

The articles in this publication highlight the need for strong school-community relationships in urban and rural settings. The following action plan summarizes the steps that all practitioners—those in urban and rural areas as well as those in the suburbs—can take to develop and maintain strong community schools.

- Try to understand how students' experiences outside the school affect their behavior in school. Reach out to students, and help them learn by applying aspects of the curriculum to real-world problems or activities in the community.
- Teach students about their community's history, resources, needs, and opportunities. Develop curricula that incorporate knowledge of the ecology, civic involvement, economics, spirituality, and community living. Give students a chance to learn through community involvement—for example, through service-learning programs.
- Participate in professional development activities to keep up with changing technology and to gain ideas on how to use technology in your classroom. Provide Internet access to students and community members, and explore how they can use the World Wide Web to enrich themselves and their community.
- Start a school-to-work program that helps students connect learning at school with opportunities for employment. Invite entrepreneurs and other members of the business community to visit your classroom to discuss careers. Consider establishing small, student-run business ventures in the school; make sure these businesses do not compete with existing firms, especially in smaller communities. These activities can help students and adults strengthen their ties to the community.
- Become a mentor to students, or establish a mentoring program that pairs students with community members who can serve as role models.
- Reflect on and eliminate any stereotypes you may have about parents or other community members, and try to overcome any language and cultural differences that may exist.
- Establish lines of communication that keep students' families informed about school affairs. Learn to speak to community members plainly; avoid jargon and technical terms.
- Build trust with families and community members by involving them in the school decision-making process. For example, establish a school planning and management team that focuses on students'

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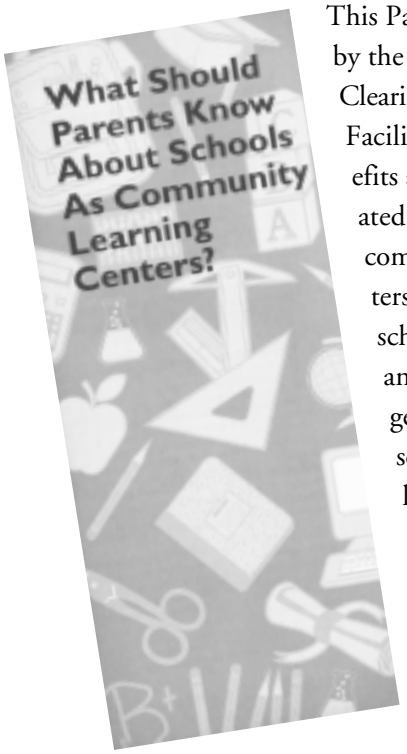
emotional, social, and other personal needs, and invite community members to be part of the team.

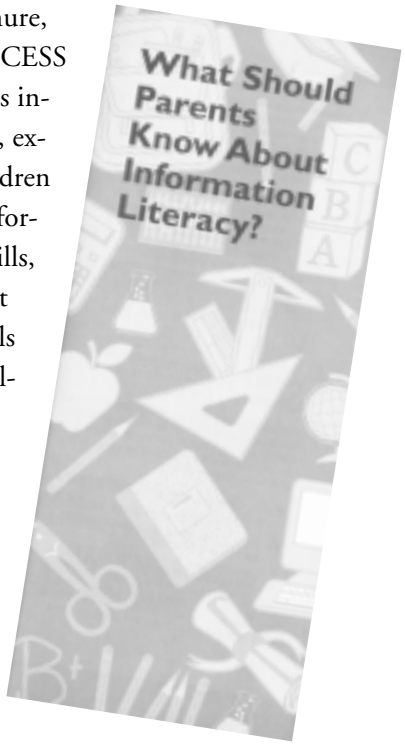
- Implement school reforms that match community values and that meet community needs. For example, appropriate reforms may include incorporating personalized instruction, cooperative learning, and performance assessments into the curriculum.
- Recognize and strengthen the interdependence of your school and your community by forming partnerships with community agencies. Draw on the resources of local businesses, unions, clubs, churches, temples, social service agencies, health care providers, colleges, and universities to support school-community partnerships.
- Learn to listen to different voices in the community. By addressing mutual concerns, you can build the school's credibility and foster relationships to improve the quality of life for all community members.
- Provide community members with opportunities for lifelong education, and make the school the center of these activities. Collaborate with community groups to develop programs and workshops that address community needs such as family literacy, adult computer skills, or parenting skills. Consider establishing a learning resource center that is open to the public and setting up an afterschool program with enriching activities and snacks for students.
- Reach out to community residents with underutilized talents and energies by giving them the opportunity to contribute to the school. In so doing, not only will you be helping them reinforce their skills, but you will also be taking steps to strengthen the social infrastructure in your community.

ACCESS ERIC Announces Two New Parent Brochures!



This Parent Brochure, written by the staff at the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, discusses the benefits and challenges associated with using schools as community learning centers, provides examples of school-community alliances, and includes suggestions for promoting schools as community learning centers. This brochure also includes resources that parents can use to learn more about schools as community learning centers.

This Parent Brochure, written by the ACCESS ERIC staff, defines information literacy, explains why all children should develop information literacy skills, and describes what parents and schools can do to help children acquire and strengthen these skills. Resources that parents can use to learn more about information literacy are also included.



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